

# **ST. LUKE’S INN OF COURT**

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### **“A History of the Anglican Church—Part XXIII (Sect. 3): An Essay on the Role of Christian Lawyers and Judges within the Secular State”©**

**By**

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The ideas expressed in this Apostolate Paper are wholly those of the author, and subject to modification as a result of on-going research into this subject matter. This paper is currently being revised and edited, but this version is submitted for the purpose of sharing Christian scholarship with clergy, the legal profession, and the general public.

### **PREFACE**

The organized Christian church of the Twenty-First Century is in crisis and at a crossroad. Christianity as a whole is in flux. And I believe that Christian lawyers and judges are on the frontlines of the conflict and changes which are today challenging both the Christian church and the Christian religion. Christian lawyers and judges have the power to influence and shape the social, economic, political, and legal landscape in a way that will allow Christianity and other faith-based institutions to evangelize the world for the betterment of all human beings. I write this essay, and a series of future essays, in an effort to persuade the American legal profession to rethink and reconsider one of its most critical and important jurisprudential foundations: the Christian religion. To this end, I hereby present the thirty-sixth essay in this series: “A History of the Anglican Church—Part XXIII (Part 3).”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> **This paper on the Protestant Reformation in England (1530-1650) is dedicated to the Jewish legal community.** At the University of Illinois College of Law, certain Jewish professors were of great assistance to my professional development: **Marvin Gerstein, Esq.** (moot court adjunct); Professor **Anthony Taibi** (civil procedure; legal theory); Professor **Steven Ross** (comparative constitutional law). Jewish history and culture, as reflected in the Old Testament, have also deeply influenced me ever since my early childhood. I knew no Jews as a child growing up in the Bible-Belt in rural, northern Florida, but I had a profound respect for the Jewish heritage. I had been taught that the Jews were God’s chosen people. And, up to the late 1980s, the contemporary clashed between African Americans and Jews in cities such as New York and Chicago I had heard and knew nothing. This lack of exposure to some of the contemporary challenges between African Americans and Jews allowed me to objectively assess Jewish heritage and culture, and to freely dialogue and embrace Jewish law professors and fellow law students during the early 1990s. No other group (not the Roman Catholics, African Americans, Hispanics, or whites) were as open, willing, and eager to discuss with me such unique topics such as “race, law and economics,” and “law and religion” as were the Jewish law professors and students. I also found the Jewish law faculty to be a treasure trove

“John Calvin’s *Institutes of the Christian Religion* is a founding document of Anglo-American constitutional law.”

-- Roderick O. Ford, Esq.

*“Calvin’s theology on the ‘Priesthood of all believers’ made every man a monk and turned the entire secular community into a monastery, thereby requiring the common man to pursue his secular vocation with religious zeal and dedication. This created what is known as the Protestant work ethic and became the foundation of the modern Western nation state.”*

-- Roderick O. Ford, Esq.

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Calvinism: Anglo American Constitutional Law

John Calvin’s extraordinary influence upon Western civilization owes much to his legal education, training, and knowledge of the *Corpus Juris Civilis* (the Code of Justinian, circa 529 A.D.) The *Corpus Juris Civilis* was codified in the sixth century and introduced to Western Europe during the twelfth century. This body of law reflected ancient pagan and Greco-Roman ideas of natural law, as well as Judea-Christian ideas of justice. It became the law of the Roman Catholic

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of practical instruction, mentoring, and wisdom. The Jewish law professors seemed to have a thorough grasp of what everybody else was thinking and doing; they seemed to be able to move diplomatically and fluidly between the various groups of conservative and liberal whites, Hispanics, and African Americans, without losing a sense of their own internal Jewishness. The Jewish law professors and law students at the University of Illinois were the first real Jews whom I actually met and held conversations with. And, given my rural background in the Bible Belt of northern Florida, I could not pass up the opportunity to discuss the forbidden topics of “law and religion,” “the Jews and Christianity,” “black and Jews,” etc., etc. The Jewish legal community has always been willing to share with me their thoughts, history, and heritage. For it has been their insights into the origins of law and constitutional law that have tremendously helped me to unravel many questions that I have had regarding the role of Christianity in shaping the secular legal system. The life’s work of John Calvin reminds me of how much the Old Testament has influenced the building of Western law and civilization. Calvin based most of his theology on Hebrew traditions found in the Bible. And he believed that the ancient Hebrew polity which God had given to Moses was the best form of government known to mankind. Calvin based his Christian polity off of the ancient Hebrew polity as found in the Bible. And yet, the Old Testament is seldom, if ever, discussed within the American legal academy. This is a very tragic development in Western legal education. For the most part, my religious knowledge and interests were not allowed to be expressed in the classroom in law school, but I managed to quench my thirst for the topic of “law and religion” in a course on “Jurisprudence,” which led to my research project, “The American Jurist: A Natural Law Interpretation of the U.S. Constitution, 1787 to 1910.” Much of the research for this paper had already taken place several years before I entered law school. And so I entered law school thoroughly prepared to research and discuss legal theory, law and religion. I distinctly remember that one new topic that caught my attention was the 16th-century era New England colonies and the Virginia colony (i.e., the Puritans and the Anglicans of early colonial America). I readily noticed how closely the Bible was aligned to early America’s court opinions, statutes, and constitutional provisions. 16th and 17th century New England pastors were of some interest to me. I therefore maintained a vague interest in the development of early American jurisprudence from 1607 up to 1776, in order to ascertain precisely how, why, and when American legal positivism supplanted the natural-law foundations of American jurisprudence. As a Christian law student, the Christian foundations within American law and jurisprudence continuously preoccupied my extra-curricular and supplemental readings in law. And Calvinism remained one of the predominant themes within those supplemental readings.

Church and it was taught in all of the European universities as the body of civil law during the 1520s and 30s when Calvin was a student in Paris, Orleans, and Bourges. Hence, the *Corpus Juris Civilis* complemented the rise of Renaissance humanism during this period, because the humanists were posing a direct challenge to Scholasticism (i.e., the “Schoolmen”) by re-reading the Greco-Roman pagan classics, the original Greek New Testament, and the Hebrew Scriptures.

To many theologians and clergymen who lived in Western Europe during the early 1500s, the Western church seemed to be splitting into two parts: on the one hand, there was Plato and St. Augustine, and on the other hand, there was Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas. The Protestant Reformers leaned toward St. Augustine, whereas the orthodox Roman Catholics held firm with St. Thomas Aquinas.<sup>2</sup> “Thomas Aquinas, was established in the minds of the learned as the supreme authority after Scripture and the Church. Down to the present day, he has retained this position among Catholic philosophers.”<sup>3</sup>

But Luther, Calvin, and the Reformers steered clear of Aquinas, preferring instead the theology of St. Augustine.<sup>4</sup> John Calvin, much like Luther, was thoroughly Augustinian.<sup>5</sup> “Particularly the influence of the church father Augustine on Calvin was great. Smits (1957-1958) points out meticulously the extent to which Calvin borrowed from Augustine. The total number of references to Augustine in Calvin’s *Institutes [of the Christian Religion]* (1559 edition) as identified by Smits runs to 1,175.”<sup>6</sup> But while Calvin and the Reformers were eventually successful in breaking the power of Rome, they were left with the enigma of precisely where and how to place the new Protestant Church within the secular realm. “Almost from the very beginning, there was a division among Protestants as to the power of the state in religious matters.”<sup>7</sup> This problem required thorough legal knowledge of both the Church and the State. And this

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<sup>2</sup> Bertrand Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy* (New York, N.Y.: Touchstone, 2007), p. 478.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, stating: “I cannot but think that the substitution of [St. Thomas and ] Aristotle for Plato and Saint Augustine was a mistake from the Christian point of view.”

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, p. 523 (“Luther and Calvin reverted to Saint Augustine, retaining, however, only that part of his teaching which deals with the relation of the soul to God, not the part which is concerned with the Church. Their theology was such as to diminish the power of the Church. They abolished purgatory, from which the souls of the dead could be delivered by masses. They rejected the doctrine of Indulgences, upon which a large part of the papal revenue depended. By the doctrine of predestination, the fate of the soul after death was made wholly independent of the actions of priests. These innovations, while they helped in the struggle with the Pope, prevented the Protestant Churches from becoming as powerful in Protestant countries as the Catholic Church was in Catholic countries.”)

<sup>6</sup> “Philosophical and theological influences in John Calvin’s thought: reviewing some research results ,“ B.J. van der Walt School of Philosophy Potchefstroom Campus North-West University, [www.hannah@intekom.co.za](mailto:www.hannah@intekom.co.za)

<sup>7</sup> Bertrand Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy*, p. 523.

problem made Calvin's legal knowledge, training, and ability most useful to the Protestant Reformation.<sup>8</sup>

For it was Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion*,<sup>9</sup> which eclipsed the writings of Luther in the minds of most Protestants who were looking for answers to such questions as the relationship between the Church and the State and the rights of individual citizens vis-à-vis the State, that permeated Protestant churches throughout Europe, England and colonial America. Several Calvinists, who were contemporaries John Calvin, went on to clarify constitutional democratic practice that helped to lay the foundation of the "social contract," "bills of rights," and "human rights."<sup>10</sup> Their theological concepts grounded constitutional law in the Ten Commandments, and grounded civil rights upon divine obligations and commands that were also rooted in natural law.<sup>11</sup> Among this group of influential Calvinist was the Englishman and Puritan Christopher Goodman (1520-1603).<sup>12</sup> Goodman

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<sup>8</sup> As previously mentioned, Calvin borrowed heavily from the Roman legal tradition, and his fundamental legal philosophy was no different than of St. Thomas Aquinas', to wit: eternal law→divine law→natural law→human (civil) law. In other words, Calvin continued to embrace the Catholic Church's theory of moral law, natural law, divine law, and human or civil law. See, e.g., Norman Doe, *Christianity and Natural Law* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2017), pp. 121-139.

<sup>9</sup> In Calvin's day, the word "Institutes" was a synonym for "law" and "jurisprudence."

<sup>10</sup> "Later Calvinists also laid some of the foundations for Western theories of democracy and human rights. One technique, developed by Calvinist writers like Christopher Goodman (c. 1530-1603), Theodore Beza (1519-1605), and Johannes Althusius (1557-1638), was to ground rights in the duties of the Decalogue [i.e., Ten Commandments] and other biblical moral teachings. The First Table of the Decalogue prescribes duties of love that each person owes to God—to honor God and God's name, to observe the Sabbath day and to worship, to avoid false gods and false swearing. The Second Table prescribes duties of love that each person owes to neighbors—to honor one's parents and other authorities, not to kill, not to commit adultery, not to steal, not to bear false witness, not to covet. The reformers cast the person's duties toward God as a set of rights that others could not obstruct—the right to religious exercise: the right to honor God and God's name, the right to rest and worship on one's Sabbath, the right to be free from false gods and false oath. They cast a person's duties toward a neighbor, in turn, as the neighbor's right to have that duty discharged. One person's duties not to kill, to commit adultery, to steal or to bear false witness thus gives rise to another person's rights to life, property, fidelity, and reputation." John Witte, Jr., *Christianity and Law* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge Univ. P., 2008), p. 24.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> "Christopher Goodman BD (1520–1603) was an English reforming clergyman and writer. He was a Marian exile, who left England to escape persecution during the counter-reformation in the reign of Queen Mary I of England. He was the author of a work on limits to obedience to rulers, and a contributor to the Geneva Bible. He was a friend of John Knox, and on Mary's death went to Scotland, later returning to England where he failed to conform. He was probably born (1520) in Chester. When about eighteen he entered Brasenose College, Oxford, graduating as B.A. 4 Feb. 1541, and M.A. 13 June 1544. In 1547 he became a senior student at Christ Church, Oxford, and was proctor in 1549. He proceeded B.D. in 1551, and is said to have become Lady Margaret's Professor of Divinity about 1548. At Oxford Goodman made friends with Bartlet Green. Goodman left England in 1554, and on 23 November his name appears among the signatures to a letter from the exiles at Strasburg. He afterwards joined the schism among the reformers at Frankfurt, and withdrew with William Whittingham and other exiles to Geneva; they jointly wrote a letter to the Frankfort congregation to defend their departure. The congregation at Geneva chose John Knox and Goodman in September 1555 for their pastors, and the two formed a lifelong friendship. During his exile Goodman took part in Miles Coverdale's translation of the Bible, and helped Knox in the "book of



and others spread Calvinism far and wide throughout Scotland and England during the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Through the Puritans, Calvinism would have a powerful influence upon the development of Anglican constitutionalism.

For this reason, John Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion* is a founding document of Anglo-American constitutional law, dealing with such questions as the separation of powers, the separation of Church and State, religious freedom, and the right of individual conscience and civil disobedience.

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The Church of England commemorates John Calvin (1509-1564) on its liturgical calendar as a "saint" and a leader of the Protestant Reformation. Indeed, Calvin maintained throughout his career close ties to the English and Scottish Protestants, including Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury and author of the *Book of Common Prayer*; the Duke of Somerset, who served as the regent to Edward VI; John Knox, the leader of the Scottish Protestants; and Queen Elizabeth I's court. Two of Calvin's books were dedicated to Edward VI, and one was dedicated to Elizabeth I. And his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, was enthusiastically translated into English in 1561 by a lawyer named Thomas Norton of London, and influenced the English Puritans during the next hundred years. It has thus been said the Calvin's influence on world history has not been direct, but indirect; that is to say, other influential men who influenced and changed history—such as John Knox of Scotland and Oliver Cromwell of England—were directly influenced by Calvin's ideas and theology. But the reader will be mistaken if he or she assumes that Calvin's profound indirect influence upon history was limited to theology, or to Europeans, or to a particular region of the world. In fact, John Calvin's towering influence transcended all of these categories and cannot be contained to a single subject matter, so that even the rise of Western European capitalism has been attributable to Calvinism.

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common order". Both he and Knox wrote some acrimonious tracts. The most famous by Goodman was entitled *How superior Powers ought to be obeyed of their subjects, and wherein they may lawfully be by God's word disobeyed and resisted* . . . Geneva, 1558. The book, in favor of Wyatt's rebellion, bitterly attacked Mary I of England and the government of women in general, which afterwards drew down Elizabeth's displeasure upon the author. Knox's *First Blast of the Trumpet* was published in the same year, and the tracts were secretly circulated in England. Their violence was generally disapproved, even by their own party. Goodman also published while abroad a *Commentary upon Amos*, in which he likens Mary to Proserpine, queen of Hades. On Elizabeth's accession, he returned briefly and somewhat furtively to London.")

## **B. Calvinism: Slavery, Africa, and the African American Church**

We may, for instance, analyze the influence of John Calvin upon the African and African American churches in Africa, the Caribbean, and the United States, as a primary example.<sup>13</sup> Calvinism's disciplinarian theology has been cited as a type of religion which formerly-enslaved and colonized peoples need in order to advance. That is to say, the poorer-classes, the working classes, and the underprivileged classes in every society have in general sought after, or demanded, a more regimented, disciplined form of religion. The Mosaic Law was no different: it was a regimented form of religion that was designed specifically for newly-emancipated Israelite slaves.<sup>14</sup> The African and African American Protestant church traditions have traditionally embraced Calvin's brand of Church regimen and discipline. More specifically, these church traditions have considered Calvinist-like Church discipline to be the surest method of overthrowing the shackles of sin and dismantling the crippling evils of colonization and slavery. Dr. Eric Washington, for instance, in his article on the African writer and abolitionist Olaudah Equiano (1745-1797), has described Calvinism as inherently anti-slavery.<sup>15</sup> And Dr. Julius Gathogo<sup>16</sup> of the ACK Bishop Hannington Institute of Mambasa, Kenya, has also given Calvinism a similar description, along with very high appraisal, where he writes:

The article sets out to demonstrate that even though John Calvin, the great reformer of the 16<sup>th</sup> century CE, was grossly misinterpreted by neo-Calvinists, especially with regard to the African context, he nevertheless deserves our attention as we mark 500 years since his birth (1509-2009). In other words, postcolonial Africa has to learn from his reforms in the socio-religious and educational sectors, among other. In the era of reconstruction, can his reforms be seen as reconstructive? Were the proponents and pioneers of an African renaissance like Marcus Garvey and WEB Dubois driven by Calvinism when they advocated 'Africa for the Africans'? Was Calvinism misinterpreted in the Afrikaners' sense of divine destiny in apartheid South Africa? To this end, the article will build on the hypothesis that our quest for an authentic and holistic liberation and reconstruction of postcolonial Africa will require us to revisit the

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<sup>13</sup> See Appendix 3, "African Americans and the Reformed Tradition."

<sup>14</sup> See, e.g., Roderick O. Ford, *The Law of Moses* (Tampa, FL: Xlibris Publications, 2017).

<sup>15</sup> See Eric Washington, "Calvinism: Inherently Anti-Slavery?" <http://thefrontporch.org/2015/04/calvinism-inherently-anti-slavery/>

<sup>16</sup> Julius Gathogo is a Post-Doctoral Research Fellow at the School of Religion and Theology, University of Kwa Zulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.



gallant efforts of John Calvin's reforms, as his was an applied and pragmatic theology that is relevant in our African context today. Reading John Calvin in the African context thus calls us to re-examine society in general and address areas that beg for reforms. In turn, this will invite us to act with decorum and with a sense of urgency.<sup>17</sup>

We may also analyze the indirect influence of Calvinism upon the African American church, culture and struggle for freedom. At some point, I recognized through my readings in Black culture that many aspects of Calvinism had been introduced to me through my parents, grandparents, and relatives since I was a toddler. That introduction to Calvinism came largely through the independent African American Primitive Baptist Churches of northern Florida. Simultaneously, since elementary school, I knew something of the basics of Puritanism's relationship to the Church of England, and the reasons why the Puritans left England and settled in what became the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

For instance, I learned the rudiments of the history of colonial New England, the Mayflower Compact, and the story of the first Thanksgiving (i.e., the Pilgrims and Native Americans sitting down for a feast). In high school, I read an essay in an American literature textbook that was written by a Congregationalist minister named Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758), and I learned of the Salem witch trials (1693-93) in an American history textbook. This religious nature of New England Puritanism became clearer when I re-took the same courses in college. In college, I was able to better connect early American history to English and European history. And while this academic preparation did not directly touch upon my courses in law school, they certainly did provide me with the foundations upon which I could readily grasp the context in which the Constitution of the United States was ratified in 1787. For instance, the moral debate on whether to keep or reject African slavery, as documented in W.E.B. Du Bois' *Suppression of the African Slave Trade*, which re-printed the Biblically-annotated colonial laws and statutes on the subject, kindled in my mind an interest in the moral attitude of the New England Puritans—the religious heirs of John Calvin-- toward African slavery and the slave trade.<sup>18</sup> See also Appendix 4, "Puritanism and Massachusetts: Slavery and the

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<sup>17</sup> Julius Gathogo, "Reading John Calvin in the African context: any relevance for the social reconstruction of Africa?" ACK Bishop Hannington Institute (2009).

<sup>18</sup> See, e.g., W.E.B. Du Bois, "The Suppression of the African Slave-Trade to the United States of America, 1638-1870," *Writings* (New York, N.Y.: The Library of America, 1986), p.199 ("1641. Massachusetts: Limitations on Slavery. 'Liberties of Forreiners & Strangers': 91. 'There shall never be any bond slaverie villinage or Captiviie amongst vs, unles it be lawful Captives taken in iust warres, & such strangers as willingly selle themselves or are sold to us. And those shall have all the liberties & Christian usages Wch Yc law of god established in Israell

Slave Trade, 1600-1780.” Puritan New England’s colonial laws on slavery and the slave-trade were taken from the Bible, and based squarely upon Biblical principle, *as though the Bible itself had been embraced as New England’s statutory and constitutional law*.<sup>19</sup> See also Appendices 3- 4, regarding Puritanism in New England, 1640-1700s. This appeared to be the constitutional status of New England throughout the entire 1600s and early 1700s.<sup>20</sup> Nor did the early moral African American petitions for freedom escape my religious interests in the Christian faith or my academic interest in natural law:

The petition of A Great Number of Blackes detained in a State of slavery in the Bowels of a free & Christian Country Humbly sheweth that your Petitioners apprehend that they have in Common with all other men a Natural and Unaliable Right to that freedom which the Great Parent of the [Universe] hath Bestowed equally on all menkind and which they have Never forfeited by any Compact or agreement whatever.... They cannot but express their Astonishment that It has [Never Been Considered] that Every Principle from which Amarica has Acted in the Cours of their unhappy Dificulties with Great Briton Pleads Stronger than A thousand arguments in favours of your petitioners.

-- Massachusetts Slave Petition 1777<sup>21</sup>

Calvinist ideas thus came to my direct attention partly through African American history. *For I have long observed and believed that a New- England-style Puritanism and discipline could be of great benefit to underprivileged African Americans who grow up in difficult circumstances, often without religion and solid family structures*, as is evidenced in my novel *Bishop Edwards* (2001, 2009, 2015). In 1995, I began slowly to take stock of the unique history of the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E. Church) in the United States, and to notice the stark differences between other Black-Church denominations. This led to the beginning of my cursory readings on the history of the Black Church. During that same year, and perhaps as relief from having recently passed the Florida Bar examination, I

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concerning such p/ doeth morally require. This exempts none from servitude who shall be Judged there by Authorite.’ ‘Capitall Laws’: 10 ‘If any man stealeth aman or mankind, he shall surely be put to death’ (marginal reference, Exodus xxi. 16). Re-enacted in the codes of 1649, 1660, and 1672. Whitmore, Reprint of Colonial Laws of 1660, etc. (1889), pp. 52, 54, 71-117.”

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> “1672, October. Connecticut: Law against Man-Stealing. ‘The General Laws and Liberties of Conecticut Colonie.’ ‘Capital Laws’: 10. ‘If any Man stealeth a Man or Man kinde, and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall be put to death. Exod. 21. 16.’ Laws of Connecticut, 1672 (repr. 1865), p. 9.” Du Bois, *Writings*, p. 200.

<sup>21</sup> Lerone Bennett, *Before The Mayflower: A History of Black America* (New York, N.Y.: Penguin Books, 1988), p. 55.

purchased several books on the U.S. Civil War and on African American history, including a little purple book titled *The Writings and Speeches of Abraham Lincoln*; the Library of America classic *Frederick Douglass: Autobiographies*; Carter G. Woodson's *Miseducation of the Negro*; James Weldon Johnson's autobiography *Along This Way*; and Ebony Magazine's renowned editor Lerone Bennett, Jr.'s *Before the Mayflower*. For it was in 1995 when I began to recognize the central role of Bishop Richard Allen and the A.M.E. Church in the struggle for African American freedom in the United States.<sup>22</sup> In fact, Bennett's *Before the Mayflower*, which is an African American history book, explicitly places the founding of "Black America" in Philadelphia in 1787 with the founding of the Free Africa Society,<sup>23</sup> from which sprang great African American pastors such as Absalom Jones (1746-1818), who became the first black to be ordained Episcopal priest and Richard Allen (1760-1831), who was ordained a Methodist preacher and later founded the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Included within that Revolutionary-War era generation of African American pastors was the great Congregationalist pastor Lemuel Haynes (1753- 1833), who preached to and led white congregations in New England. And, during the Civil War-era, there was the great Presbyterian minister Henry Highland Garnett (1815-1882), a mentor, fellow anti-slavery agitator, and an inspirational friend to Frederick Douglass (1818-1895), a Methodist pastor, and to Alexander Crummell (1819-1898), an African American Episcopal priest. As previously mentioned, Lemuel Haynes and Henry Highland Garnett were the African American heirs of Calvinism—a Calvinism which they must have believed was decisively anti-slavery.<sup>24</sup>

Of considerable interest is an anti-slavery statement in the year 1835 from the Calvinist Presbyterian synod of Kentucky, decrying the institution of slavery's brutal impact upon the African American family:

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<sup>22</sup> Heretofore, I had read during the late 1980s Benjamin Quarles' *The Negro in the Making of America*, which introduced me to a general history of the role of the Black Church in African American history. However, during the mid-1990s, I became more interested in the political and economic role which the Black church could make towards the amelioration of the black underclass. This led me to list of books, purchased in 1995, which I have previously mentioned above.

<sup>23</sup> "The day was Thursday, April 12, 1787. On that day—one month before the first session of the U.S. Constitutional Convention and two years before the election of George Washington—eight men sat down in a room in Philadelphia and created a black social compact. The compact, called the Free African Society, was a prophetic step that marked a turning in the road that is critical to the history of Black America. 'How great a step this was,' W.E.B. Du Bois wrote later, we of to-day scarcely realize; we must remind ourselves that it was the first wavering step of a people toward organized social life.'" Lerone Bennett, Jr., *Before The Mayflower: A History of Black America* (New York, N.Y.: Penguin Books, 1988), pp. 55-56.

<sup>24</sup> See, e.g., Appendix 1-H, "On Human Slavery."

Brothers and sisters, parents and children, husbands and wives, are torn asunder and permitted to see each other no more. These acts are daily occurring in the midst of us. The shrieks and agony often witnessed on such occasions proclaim, with a trumpet tongue, the iniquity of our system. There is not a neighborhood where these heart-rending scenes are not displayed. There is not a village or road that does not behold the sad procession of manacled outcasts whose mournful countenances tell that they are exiled by force from all that their hearts hold dear.<sup>25</sup>

That this Presbyterian Church made such a proclamation against slavery, from within the slave-state of Kentucky, speaks volumes on the theological position of Calvinists against American slavery.

Nearly every African American Church or Church denomination in the United States is either Calvinist or quasi-Calvinist in origin and doctrine:

- The first African American Presbyterian Church was founded in Philadelphia in 1811.<sup>26</sup> Its first minister was Rev. John Gloucester (1776-1822).
- African American Presbyterians have always remained a small percentage of Presbyterians.<sup>27</sup>
- Congregational churches are also Reformed Churches within the Calvinist tradition. African American members of Congregational Churches have always remained a small percentage of their members. Most African American churches within this tradition are affiliated with the United Church of Christ denomination.<sup>28</sup>
- Most of the first African American Baptists Congregations were Calvinists (e.g., the “Black Primitive Baptist” churches).<sup>29</sup>
- The majority of African American Christians are Baptists, which come out of the Reformed Church tradition (i.e., Calvinism).
- The African American denomination known as the Church of God in Christ (C.O.G.I.C.) is quasi-Calvinistic in its doctrine.

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<sup>25</sup> W.E.B. Du Bois, *Writings* (New York, N.Y.: The Library of America, 1986), p. 957.

<sup>26</sup> <https://hsp.org/blogs/archival-adventures-in-small-repositories/the-home-of-african-american-presbyterianism>

<sup>27</sup> <http://justiceunbound.org/carousel/waters-of-babylon-to-be-an-african-american-presbyterian/>

<sup>28</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United\\_Church\\_of\\_Christ](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Church_of_Christ)

<sup>29</sup> <http://religiondispatches.org/the-forgotten-history-of-black-calvinism-and-the-haunting-of-american-folk-music/>

- The Reformed Methodist Union Episcopal Church of Charleston, South Carolina is one of the few all-Black Methodist churches that subscribes to Calvinist or Reformed doctrine.<sup>30</sup>
- Many independent all-Black non-denominational churches in the United States embrace Calvin's theology on church governance, original sin, grace, free will, and predestination.

Indeed, Calvin's Reformed legacy and influence upon the African American Church and contribution to its struggle for freedom in the United States came indirectly through Reformed African American clergymen such as Lemuel Haynes (Congregationalist), Henry Highland Garnett (Presbyterian),<sup>31</sup> and Martin Luther King, Jr. (Baptist). Lemuel Haynes was the first African American pastor of several all-white Congregational Churches in New England during the late eighteenth century. And it was Henry Garnett's famous speech calling for a slave revolt in 1843 at Buffalo, New York that helped mobilize anti-slavery sentiment and Abolitionism in the North. And if we accept the argument that English Baptists came out of the Calvinist tradition,<sup>32</sup> and thereby embraced Augustine's and Aquinas' ideas of natural law, then we can include Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929-1968) on the list of Calvin's heirs. King's ideas on civil disobedience are decisively Calvinistic.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> "The Reformed Methodist Union Episcopal Church was organized in Charleston in 1885 after seceding from the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME). As the two major black Methodist bodies, the AME and AME Zion churches, established themselves in the South during the post-Civil War era, they found that some adherents became dissatisfied with the governance or rules of their bodies. The beginning of the Reformed Methodists has been attributed to two possible causes. According to one view, the separation occurred because of differences over the selection of representatives to an annual conference. The other view holds that the Reverend William E. Johnson and some erstwhile congregants of the famed Morris Brown AME Church sought ownership of the church's property. The court battle between the Johnson contingent and the AME Church resulted in a ruling that each party could use the facilities provided that it kept membership in the denomination. Nonetheless, sometime later the Johnson faction withdrew and organized the Reformed Methodist Church. Possibly, each of these accounts is a constituent element of the whole story. It is clear, however, that the Reformed party initially sought a more congregationally based, less episcopal-style church governance. The denomination is Methodist in theology, doctrine, and practice, with love feasts and class meetings. One hundred years after its establishment, the church had eighteen congregations, twenty-six clergy, and 3,800 members. Headquartered in Charleston, the church publishes *The Doctrines and Discipline*."

<sup>31</sup> See Appendix 3, "African Americans and the Reformed Tradition."

<http://www.scencyclopedia.org/sce/entries/reformed-methodist-union-episcopal-church/>

<sup>32</sup> Norman Doe, *Christianity and Natural Law: An Introduction*, (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge Univ. P., 2017), pp.140-161.

<sup>33</sup> In Book IV of the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Calvin wrote that true Christian obedience to the civil magistrate was to replicate Christ's crucifixion on the cross; Christians must passively resist evil and be ready and willing to die for the truth. "But since Peter, one of heaven's heralds, had published the edict, 'We ought to obey God rather than men,' (Acts 5: 29,)," Calvin admonished Christians to obey God first, while passively resisting the civil magistrate, on important questions of truth and conscience. Martin Luther King, Jr. embraced the exact same prescription. See, e.g., Norman Doe, *Christianity and Natural Law: An Introduction*, (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge Univ. P., 2017), p. 155 ("Given this conception of natural law that is 'above' positive laws that hold sway in any human society, it comes as no surprise to see one of the most famous and influential Baptists of the twentieth



We might also accredit Calvin's indirect influence upon W.E.B. Du Bois,<sup>34</sup> New England upbringing<sup>35</sup>, where he attended a Congregational Church and lived in a Puritan New England community. In his *Autobiography*, Du Bois accredits this Puritan upbringing with helping to mold his reserved character, mannerisms, and work ethic—features which we have come to know as being aspects of Calvin's influences upon the wider culture. He also praises the New England Puritans and Abolitionists who sent money and teachers to the South after the U.S. Civil War to help found schools and colleges for African Americans. W.E.B. Du Bois was an advocate of social morals, personal integrity, and responsibility,<sup>36</sup> although he was no fan of religious ritual and superstition. Du Bois' God was cosmopolitan, universal, interfaith, and went beyond the four-corners of Church dogma. But Du Bois was a self-proclaimed believer in "God" and the "Prince of Peace."<sup>37</sup> During his student days and professorship in the South of the early twentieth century, Du Bois experienced difficulty in joining in the liturgical rituals of African American Churches due in large measure to his reserved, introverted character and to his New England upbringing within majority-white Congregational Churches.

To sum up, we may thus responsibly deduce that the African and African American church communities viewed Calvin and Calvinism as positive

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century, Martin Luther King, Jr., arguing for obedience to positive laws that cohere with a 'moral law or the law of God', and disobedience to laws that breach that moral or natural law. Writing from Birmingham City on 16 April 1963, where he has been incarcerated for civil disobedience, he states: '[T]here are two types of laws: There are just laws and there are unjust laws. I would be the first to advocate obeying just laws. One has not only a legal but moral responsibility to obey just laws. Conversely, one has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws. I would agree with Saint Augustine that 'An unjust law is no law at all.'")

<sup>34</sup> W.E.B. Du Bois, the first African American to earn the Harvard Ph.D., was the great-grandson of white French Huguenots from whom he received the surname "Du Bois."

<sup>35</sup> During the late 1980s, I became what my rightfully be called a "W.E.B. Du Bois" scholar, having completed an 80-page history thesis on his life and times. This research paper was supervised by Dr. Susan Chapelle (A.B., Harvard; Ph.D., Johns Hopkins) at Morgan State University. It was then when I first read Du Bois' Harvard Ph.D. dissertation, *The Suppression of the African Slave Trade* (1896). I also had the privilege of conducting a telephone interview with Mrs. Du Bois Williams (Ph.D., Univ. of Colorado), who is the daughter of the late Yolanda DuBois, who was W.E.B. Du Bois' only surviving child beyond infancy. I was able to connect with Dr. Williams through the Special Collections Librarian at the Soper Library, Morgan State campus. This librarian brought to my attention a very special book, titled *The Prayers of W.E.B. Du Bois*, which contained several prayers and spiritual poems which W.E.B. Du Bois had written and dedicated throughout his long lifespan. Another insight into the religion and belief system of Dr. Du Bois can be found in his *Autobiography of W.E.B. Du Bois*, in which he describes his New England upbringing and his Congregational Church.

<sup>36</sup> In his 1987 essay, "The Conservation of Races," Du Bois wrote: "The Negro Academy ought to sound a note of warning that would echo in every black cabin in the land: *Unless we conquer our present vices they will conquer us*: we are diseased, we are developing criminal tendencies, and an alarmingly large percentage of our men and women are sexually impure." W.E.B. Du Bois, *Writings* (New York, N.Y.: The Library of America, 1986), p. 824.

<sup>37</sup> See, e.g., "The Credo," by W.E.B. Du Bois.



influences. We may also deduce that not only was John Calvin one of the most masterful interpreters of Scripture of all time, but that his interpretation of the Bible's regulations of slavery did not support the genre of chattel slavery and slave laws that were maintained in the United States. See, e.g., Appendix 1-H, "On Human Slavery." And it is safe to conclude that African American Calvinists never interpreted Calvin's theology as being in favor of slavery. See, e.g., Appendix 3, "African Americans and the Reformed Tradition."

### C. Calvinism: Secular Political Economy

Somehow, John Calvin and Calvinist thinkers kept percolating up from my course materials, assignments, and various extracurricular readings in economics, politics, and history. I was, for instance, introduced to Calvin from various secular publications during my undergraduate and law school years. Calvin was always associated with early-modern capitalism. For example, Bertrand Russell writes:

What came of this dictum you may read in Tawney's *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*.... 'Usury' means all lending money at interest, not only, as now, lending at an exorbitant rate.... With the Reformation, the situation changed. Many of the most earnest Protestants were business men, to whom lending money at interest was essential. Consequently first Calvin, and then other Protestant divines, sanctioned interest.<sup>38</sup>

Russel goes on to say that "when Protestantism arose, its support—especially the support of Calvinism—came chiefly from the rich middle class, who were lenders rather than borrowers."<sup>39</sup> This rising middle class was often at odds with the sanctioning power "of Church and king."<sup>40</sup>

This mundane description of Calvin and Calvinism was likewise repeated in Max Weber's *The Protestant Work Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*.<sup>41</sup> Political scientists, economists, and lawyers always honed in on a theory that Calvin's theology of predestination and philosophy of money-lending freed up European finance to lend money with interest and thereby launched the rise of capitalism in Western Europe. Max Weber's *The Protestant Work Ethic* attributed Europe's

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<sup>38</sup> Bertrand Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy* (New York, N.Y.: Touchstone, 2007), pp. 187-188.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid, p. 623.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, p. 597.

<sup>41</sup> Max Weber, *The Protestant Work Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York, N.Y.: Vigeo Press, 2017).

free-market culture and ideas of free to Calvinism.<sup>42</sup> For Calvin, the argument goes, opened up the monasteries and made every Christian a monk, thereby distilling throughout the secular society a degree of piety or pietism not heretofore seen in the history of mankind.<sup>43</sup> By making every man a “priest,” Calvin made every secular vocation a “ministry”; and the Protestant Christian laity was expected to carry out their duties to attain secular vocational knowledge and to perform their secular vocations with religious zeal and devotion.<sup>44</sup> As Professor Weber has succinctly summarized this theory on Calvinism as follows:

Calvinism opposed organic social organization in the fiscal-monopolistic form which it assumed in Anglicanism under the Stuarts, especially in the conceptions of Laud, this alliance of Church and State with the monopolists on the basis of a Christian, social ethical foundation. Its leaders were universally among the most passionate opponents of this type of politically privileged commercial, putting-out, and colonial capitalism. Over against it they placed the individualistic motives of rational legal acquisition by virtue of one's own ability and initiative. And, while the politically privileged monopoly industries in England all disappeared in short order, this attitude played a large and decisive part in the development of the industries which grew up in spite of and against the authority of the State. The Puritans... repudiated all connection with the large-scale capitalistic courtiers and projectors as an ethically suspicious class. On the other hand, they took pride in their own superior middle-class business morality, which formed the true reason for the persecutions to which they were subjected on the part of those circles. Defoe proposed to win the battle against dissent by boycotting bank credit and withdrawing deposits. The difference of the two types of capitalistic attitude when to a very large extent hand in hand with religious differences....

One of the fundamental elements of the spirit of modern capitalism, and not only of that but of all modern culture: rational conduct on the basis of the idea of the calling, was born—that is what this discussion has sought to demonstrate—from the spirit of Christian asceticism....

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

The Puritan wanted to work in a calling; we are forced to do so. For when asceticism was carried out of monastic cells into everyday life, and began to dominate worldly morality, it did its part in building the tremendous cosmos of the modern economic order.<sup>45</sup>

Hence, Calvin's experiments in Geneva, Switzerland were viewed by many persons as pure austerity; and, for several years, a group of powerful businessmen, called the Libertines, opposed Calvin. But in the end, Calvinism spread throughout Europe and England.<sup>46</sup> The Puritans brought it to colonial America.<sup>47</sup> Hence, the theory in political economy is widely held that Calvinism laid the foundation for modern-day free markets and capitalism.

When I studied political economy in undergraduate and law school, I encountered ever so often brief references to John Calvin and the influence of early Calvinism in the emergence of capitalism. These secular descriptions of John Calvin made me not like him or consider him as a very serious theologian. Their secular descriptions of Calvin's theology on predestination always revolved around its influence upon the business class. And whenever they did peripherally mention Calvin's Christian theology, their focus was always on one word: Predestination. Secular scholars always do an extremely poor job of defining or discussing Calvin's idea of "predestination." And they seldom put Calvin's ideas within the wider context of Augustine's and Luther's theologies.

Somehow, within the American university, Calvin's idea of predestination always seemed to open the door only to free-market capitalism—a strange manipulation of Calvin's central life's work as a pastor and theologian,—a life's work that had no nexus to economic theory or business and industry. Significantly, secular scholars within the universities never seemed to analyze Calvin's theology of predestination from the standpoint of God's omnipotence, omniscience, and prevenient grace. Nor did they ever compare Calvin's theology on predestination to St. Augustine's definition of "free will," or the John Wesley's Arminianism. Secular scholars also failed to display a complete understanding of what it truly means to be "born again," in the sense that Calvin had incorporated the idea of being "born again" into his theology on predestination. And so, to simply subordinate Calvin's theology on predestination to the status of a tool of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century business class, was not only disheartening, but also highlights the need for Christian scholars (lawyers, doctors of philosophy, theologians, etc.) to

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid, pp. 128-129.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

remain actively engaged with non-Christian scholars within the American university.

#### **D. Calvinism: Ancient Hebrew Polity as Constitutional Model<sup>48</sup>**

Calvin truly was a devout pastor, an Augustinian theologian, and a Christian pilgrim. He incorporated much Jewish history, culture, and philosophy into his Protestant ideas on church and state. We too often overlook the fact that the very documents upon which Calvin developed his legal and political theories upon which modern Western Europe's constitutional democracy would emerge, were the Greek New Testament and the Hebrew Old Testament. Calvin's reverence for the language and text of the Bible was profound, and he admonished the Magistrates, Princes, and Kings of Europe to develop the civil polity around Biblical principles. Calvin did not look to the ancient Greek polis for advice; nor did he readily consult Plato and Aristotle for answers to divine oracles; nor did he place much credence in Roman stoicism and the example of the ancient Roman republic.

Indeed, in rejecting or ignoring much of the wisdom from Greece and Rome, Calvin conceptualized himself as distancing himself from the Roman Catholic Church. What Calvin sought was the purification of religion through a rediscovery of the original meaning of the text of the Bible. And in so making that rediscovery, Calvin adopted wholeheartedly the political and constitutional models of ancient Judaism. The Protestant Reformation thus became through the writings of Calvin and others, among other things, *the elevation of the ancient Hebrew polis and constitutional model above the Greco-Roman constitutional and hierarchical model* that had been incorporated into European institutions through the Roman Catholic Church. The profound result was two-fold: first, the Church was slowly democratized; and, second, the State was slowly democratized. The foundation of all this was that, through Jesus Christ, there was “the priesthood of all believers,” meaning that each individual was both a priest for himself and for his fellow man.”<sup>49</sup> The profound power of the Roman Catholic priesthood over the laity and the secular state was broken. Up from these ashes arose new ideas—such as Calvinism—that would give rise to modern Western constitutional democracy.

#### **1. Sola Scriptura and the ancient Hebrew Polity**

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<sup>48</sup> See, e.g., APPENDIX 3: “Puritanism and Slavery in Colonial New England, 1640-1700.”

<sup>49</sup> J. Leslie Dunstan, *Protestantism* (New York, N.Y.: Washington Square, 1961), pp. 244-247.

John Calvin's primary task was to convince his readers and listeners that the Roman Catholic system of Church and State was immoral and completely unbiblical. Thus embracing Luther's idea of Sola Scriptura, Calvin was a masterful Bible scholar and theologian. And, during the course of presenting his polemic against Roman Catholicism, he rediscovered the context of ancient Judaism and early Christianity. He juxtaposed his new discoveries with the current state of the 16<sup>th</sup> century Roman Catholic Church, and he suggested that true Christians should separate themselves from this corrupt Church. When in Geneva, Switzerland the task of carefully and clearly defining how the new Protestant Church and State should be established and governed, Calvin turned not to ancient Greece and Rome but rather to the Bible for guidance. In Calvin's mind, the ancient Hebrew polity was wrought by the hand of God and was narrowly tailored toward human nature to effectuate liberty.<sup>50</sup>

Like the ancient Hebrews, Calvin believed in the God of Abraham and that this God was omniscient and omnipresent. This God was the essence of the constitution upon which the church and state should be built. The Decalogue (i.e., "the words of the covenant")<sup>51</sup> was in Calvin's mind God's constitutional law for all of mankind. The Law of Moses was, in essence, "the words of the covenant"<sup>52</sup> between God and mankind. In Deuteronomy 29 & 30, for example, Moses gave to Israel the "covenant," which was based upon the evidence of God's existence, power, and salvation. "Ye have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes in the land of Egypt unto Pharaoh, and unto all his servants, and unto all his lands," said Moses.<sup>53</sup> He goes on to expressly charge all of Israel, from the Chief-Magistrate (i.e., Joshua) down to the captains, elders, officers, and each individual Hebrew family member, to keep the "words of this covenant."<sup>54</sup> Moses admonishes them to carefully observe the disastrous experiences from the surrounding ungodly nations that followed after idols, wood, stone, silver and gold, and "whose heart turneth away this day from the LORD our God."<sup>55</sup> He uses as examples of God's wrath and punishment such nations as Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim.<sup>56</sup> Moses

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<sup>50</sup> John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (USA: Pantianos Classics, 2017), p. 531.

<sup>51</sup> See, e.g., Deuteronomy 29 & 30.

<sup>52</sup> Deuteronomy 29:1.

<sup>53</sup> Deuteronomy 29:2.

<sup>54</sup> Deuteronomy 29:2-29.

<sup>55</sup> Deuteronomy 29:17.

<sup>56</sup> Deuteronomy 29:23.

goes on to describe God's covenant as a "blessing and a curse."<sup>57</sup> Moses explains that in order to keep this covenant, it would be necessary to "return unto the LORD thy God... with all thine heart, and with all thy soul... to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart.... [and] to circumcise thine heart...."<sup>58</sup>

In sum, Moses explained that God would bless those who kept his covenant "[i]f thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law, and it thou turn unto the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul."<sup>59</sup> Finally, in describing God's covenant, Moses thus said to the children of Israel: "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and they seed may live...."<sup>60</sup> This was, in essence, Calvin's message to his fellow Protestant Reformers: clergy and laity; civil magistrates and fellow citizens. Calvin admonished his fellow Protestants establish a Christian polity that was based upon the ancient Hebrew model.

## **2. Hebrew Polity as Western Europe's Constitutional Model**

Within ancient Hebrew Polity, God himself is the Law; he is the foundation of all Justice. God "is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he."<sup>61</sup> For this reason, within Hebrew Polity, God remains at all times the sovereign King.<sup>62</sup>

God's written "Ark of the Covenant" was handed to Moses and served ancient Israel as its first constitution.<sup>63</sup> This constitution was "written,"<sup>64</sup> and its form of government was democratic<sup>65</sup> and federal<sup>66</sup> in nature.

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<sup>57</sup> Deuteronomy 30:1.

<sup>58</sup> Deuteronomy 30: 2, 5-6.

<sup>59</sup> Deuteronomy 30:10.

<sup>60</sup> Deuteronomy 30:19.

<sup>61</sup> Deuteronomy 32:4.

<sup>62</sup> "God, though unseen, was the acknowledged King. Whatever the outward form of the government—whether democratic, as till the close of Samuel's regency—or Monarchical, as under the kings—or Oligarchic, as after the Captivity—through all it was Theocratic." "The Ancient Hebrew Polity," *The Presbyterian Quarterly* 12.2 (April 1898): 153-169.

<sup>63</sup> "The Constitution itself given by Jehovah was submitted, in all its details, to the ratification of the people; and He, by public acclamation, was accepted as their Sovereign. This was done in the first instance just before the death of Moses, as thus recorded in Deuteronomy: "These are the words of the Covenant which the Lord commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, besides the Covenant which He made with them in Horeb. ...



Next, directly underneath God is his Vice-Regent. This Vice-Regent could be called different names. For example, Moses and Joshua were God's Vice-Regents, and their official title was called the Prime Minister (Hebrew: *Eved Adonai*).<sup>67</sup> After Joshua, the Vice-Regents were called "judges."

Beneath the Prime Minister or Judge was the Council of 70, or the Privy Council. Moses appointed this council to serve as special advisors.

Beneath the Council of 70 were the Princes or Heads of the twelve tribes of Israel. Within this group of tribal leaders were the elders (Hebrew: *zekenim*), judges or civil magistrates (Hebrew: *nesi'im*).<sup>68</sup> When all the Council members and the Princes or Heads met together with the Eved Adoni and the Priests, they formed the Congregation.

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Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord your God, your Captains of your tribes, your Elders and your Officers, with all the men of Israel, . . . that thou shouldst enter into Covenant with the Lord thy God, and into His oath which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day." (29:1, 10, 12.) "The Ancient Hebrew Polity," *The Presbyterian Quarterly* 12.2 (April 1898): 153-169.

<sup>64</sup> "Let it be noted, first of all, that it was the only government in those ancient times with a written Constitution."

"The Ancient Hebrew Polity," *The Presbyterian Quarterly* 12.2 (April 1898): 153-169.

<sup>65</sup> "The Hebrew government rested upon the consent of the people, formally and constitutionally expressed. This is recognized in modern times as the corner-stone of civil liberty, which claims for the subject not only the right to determine the character and form of the government, but also a voice in shaping the legislation." "The Ancient Hebrew Polity," *The Presbyterian Quarterly* 12.2 (April 1898): 153-169.

<sup>66</sup> "The Mosaic constitution laid the foundations for the first Israelite polity, which was organized federally around a loose union of tribes, traditionally twelve in number. This union, perhaps the first true federal system in history, was bound together by a common constitution and law but maintained relatively rudimentary national institutions grafted onto more fully articulated tribal ones whose origins may have antedated the Exodus." Daniel J. Elazar, "The Polity in Biblical Israel," Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, <http://www.jcpa.org/dje/articles3/apl-ch1.htm>

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<sup>68</sup> "The *nesi'im* (literally, those raised up, best translated as magistrates) and *zekenim* (elders) were responsible for the day-to-day governance of the people, a function which was later defined as the *keter malkhut* (literally, crown of kingship, understood more generally as the domain of civil rule). They had a dual function in that they headed the individual tribes and also participated in the governance of the nation as a whole.<sup>12</sup> An additional republican guarantee of this system was the fact that the Israelites had no standing army but relied for protection on the tribal militias consisting of every male age twenty or over." Daniel J. Elazar, "The Polity in Biblical Israel," *Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs*, <http://www.jcpa.org/dje/articles3/apl-ch1.htm>

Finally, the Levitical Priesthood, together with its High Priest, formed an altogether separate group. These were the first-born sons of all the tribesmen, and they were called the Levites. They were to inherit no land but instead received compensation from the offerings and tithes. Not all Levites became priests, but most of them served the Temple or Tabernacle as religious scholars, lawyers, professors, rabbis, magistrates, judicial officers, and the like.<sup>69</sup>

This Hebrew polity took shape after Moses had delivered the ancient Israelites from Egypt. For it was the suggestion of Moses' father-in-law, Jethro, a Midian priest, that Moses should establish a *federal system of courts*<sup>70</sup> with a fully functional *appellate court system*.<sup>71</sup> In Exodus 18:21, Jethro is reported to have advised Moses, "thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. And let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee."<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> "We come next to the Priestly and Levitical Order, considered of course not in their religious, but in their political, relations. One entire tribe was substituted for the first-born male of every family ; thus at the outset, making it a representative class, performing duties which were obligatory upon the whole people. It was protected from aspiring to Priestly domination by their dispersion among the Tribes, by the surrender of landed estate, by their dependence upon tithes and offerings for their support. They were the Literary Faculty, answering to the University Class of our times, as Mr. Coleridge suggests—and supplying the Judges, Genealogists, Lawyers, Physicians, Teachers, &c, of their country. As leaders of thought, and resolving the questions of casuistry naturally arising from a complex ritual, their influence was vast, whilst it was equally conservative." "The Ancient Hebrew Polity," *The Presbyterian Quarterly* 12.2 (April 1898): 153-169.

<sup>70</sup> "In this rapid survey we have gathered the leading attributes of the Hebrew State : (1) a written Constitution, and a formal compact with the Sovereign ; (2) the distribution of power, in the self-government of the Tribes ; (3) the binding of these in the unity of a Theocratic kingdom ; (4) the prevailing equality of fortune, in the possession of the soil by the people ; (5) the supremacy of the law ; (6) the resting of the government upon the free consent of the subject; (7) the limitations upon the power of the Executive; (8) the rapid administration of justice, through a scale of Courts exceedingly minute ; (9) legislation through responsible representatives; (10) provision for the instruction of the people, as to their religious and civil duties; (11) a final appeal to the Divine Majesty, with the privilege of a response." "The Ancient Hebrew Polity," *The Presbyterian Quarterly* 12.2 (April 1898): 153-169.

<sup>71</sup> "Another department in the State was the Judiciary, which was rendered complete by the appointment of Judges over thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens. Thus was formed a scale of appellate Courts, so constructed as to make the administration of justice speedy and summary—which the impatient blood of Oriental nations always required. In accordance with Eastern custom and the primitive idea of the paternal character of kingly rule, there would seem to be the right of appeal to the throne, as in Solomon's decision between the two mothers: or in cases of still greater difficulty, there was a reference to the Divine Majesty itself, as when the appeal of Zelophehad's daughters settled the question of female succession to the father's estate. (Num. 27:2 and 5.)." "The Ancient Hebrew Polity," *The Presbyterian Quarterly* 12.2 (April 1898): 153-169.

<sup>72</sup> Exodus 18:21-22.

In other words, Moses established a federal appellate judicial system of local (i.e., tens), district (i.e., hundreds), regional (i.e., thousands), and national judges (i.e., the chief judge, or prime minister). The Bible states that “Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. And they judged the people at all seasons: the hard causes they brought unto Moses, but every small matter they judged themselves.”<sup>73</sup>

*The Presbyterian Quarterly* has reported that the republican form of government in the United States traces its roots back to this ancient Hebrew polity found in the Old Testament,<sup>74</sup> and to the Protestant Reformation.<sup>75</sup> For instance,

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<sup>73</sup> Exodus 18:25-26.

<sup>74</sup> “The Ancient Hebrew Polity,” *The Presbyterian Quarterly* 12.2 (April 1898): 153-169 (“We do not here speak of the People’s acceptance of this Constitution, which will be better exhibited in another connexion; but press the simple fact that Israel was from the beginning under a Constitutional government, in which the relations and duties of all parties under its protection were accurately defined. Such an instrument becomes not only a regulative code, but also a charter of rights. After centuries of conflict to obtain it, modern sagacity has discovered no greater safeguard of political and civil freedom.... It would be pleasant just here, to show the parallelism between the Hebrew Commonwealth and our own : which is so striking that in reciting the history of the one, we seem to be drawing the picture of the other. The twelve Tribes of Israel almost re-appear in the States of this Republic; and the weakness in the government from tribal independence was reproduced with us, compelling as in their case a closer Federal union. All this must, however, be pretermitted to make room for the statement that, in the changes of time, so much has the danger shifted from disintegration to centralism, as to lodge the only hope of preserving our American system in the autonomy of the States, and in the maintenance of their right to local self-government. Can a stronger encomium be pronounced upon that feature of the Hebrew Constitution, which so early established a bulwark against Imperialism ? ...God, though unseen, was the acknowledged King. Whatever the outward form of the government—whether democratic, as till the close of Samuel’s regency—or Monarchical, as under the kings—or Oligarchic, as after the Captivity—through all it was Theocratic. Did ever a nation possess such a bond of union before ? Did ever Majesty like this sit upon an earthly throne? Can we conceive extremes brought together, between which all friction shall be so completely removed ? How could such a King encroach upon the liberty of the subject? How could the subject find occasion to be jealous of the prerogatives of such a Monarch ? This is not all. The Hebrew religion was thus bound up in the Hebrew nationality. The two were so welded into one by the pressure of fifteen centuries and under the discipline of an extraordinary providence, that eighteen centuries of dispersion have not separated the embrace. So thoroughly was the Theocratic principle wrought into the texture of Hebrew thought that, without a country and without a government, their religion alone makes them a nation still. The Hebrew State is gone ; but the nationality which should have perished with it, survives unbroken in the Hebrew Church. When was such a crystal as this ever produced in the historic outworking of any other political Constitution ?” ... The Hebrew government rested upon the consent of the people, formally and constitutionally expressed. This is recognized in modern times as the corner-stone of civil liberty, which claims for the subject not only the right to determine the character and form of the government, but also a voice in shaping the legislation. The American Revolution, for example, which dissolved the bands of British allegiance, turned upon the principle that taxation without the right of representation was only the exaction of tribute. We find the same principle further back as the pivot upon which English history turns—from the wresting of Magna Charta by the Barons from the feeble John, to the issue of the long struggle between privilege and prerogative in the expulsion of the treacherous Stuarts from the throne. If then this vital principle shall be found incorporated in the Hebrew polity, it will justify the assertion that it was designed by the Supreme Lawgiver to confront the old despotisms, as the working model of a free government. There is room for but a few specifications, and these in the briefest synopsis: (a) The Constitution itself given by Jehovah was submitted, in all its details, to the ratification of the people; and He, by public acclamation, was accepted as their Sovereign. When Joshua represented the difficulties of this service, the response was, “Nay, but we will serve

John Calvin (1509-1564), who was an erudite Bible scholar, profound theologian, and natural-law theorist, opined in his landmark *Institutes of the Christian Religion* that the best form of civil government is a mixed form of government, because it has elements of “aristocracy” and elements of “democracy” as its key element. In the *Institutes*, Calvin discounted the value of the monarchial form of government, where he wrote:

When these three forms of government, of which philosophers treat are considered in themselves, I, for my part, am far from denying that the form which greatly surpasses the others is aristocracy, either pure or modified by popular government, not indeed in itself, but because it vary rarely happens that kings so rule themselves as never to dissent from what is just and right, or are possessed of so much acuteness and prudence as always to see correctly. *Owing therefore that vices or defects of men, it is safer and more tolerable when several bear rule, that they may thus mutually assist, instruct, and admonish each other, and should any one be disposed to go too far, the others are censors and masters to curb his excess. This has already been proved by experience, and confirmed also by the authority of the Lord himself, when he established an aristocracy bordering on popular*

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the Lord : and Joshua said unto the people, ye are witnesses unto yourselves that ye have chosen you the Lord to serve Him : and they said, we are witnesses.” (b) We find some of the Judges, as Jephtha, chosen by the people (Judges 11:5, 10, 11); although this extraordinary office especially reflected the Theocratic principle. (c) The great change wrought in the administration of government by the institution of hereditary Monarchy, was effected by the demand of the people, and against the remonstrances of Samuel: “Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay, but we will have a king over us.” (1 Sam. 8:19.) (d) Both Saul and David, after being designated by God and anointed by Samuel, did not assume the functions of royalty until they were confirmed by the popular choice. (1 Sam. 11:14, 15. 2 Sam. 2:4.) (e) David was seven years king over Judah alone, before his authority was recognised by the other Tribes; who were nevertheless absolved from the charge of rebellion.”)

<sup>75</sup> Indeed, Professor Daniel J. Elazar, has written: “The biblical discussion of the government of ancient Israel stands at the very beginning of Western political life and thought just as the political experience of ancient Israel as recounted in the Bible laid the foundations of the Jewish political tradition in all its aspects. The Bible's concern with teaching humans the right way to live in this world gives its political dimension particular importance.... [T]he seventeenth century European political philosophers were given much more credit for shaping the British colonies in North America and subsequently the United States of America, than they deserved. *We now know that, having explored the less philosophically glitzy manifestations of Reformed Protestant, especially Puritan, patterns of thought and behavior as manifested in British North America most especially as a result of the Puritan Great Awakening in England of 1610 to 1640.* The recovery of the true character of that line of development over the last forty years or so has not only much enriched our understanding of American beginnings but also has demonstrated what it is possible to do when the records are available for study. But what has been done for American history has not been done for any other.” Daniel J. Elazar, “The Polity in Biblical Israel,” *Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs*, <http://www.jcpa.org/dje/articles3/apl-ch1.htm>

*government among the Israelites*, keeping them under that as the best form, until he exhibited an image of the Messiah in David.”<sup>76</sup>

Indeed, Calvin and other Protestant reformers had a profound respect for the text, language, linguistic context, and meaning of the Bible, because they interpreted the Bible to be the literal word of God. The forms of civil government which they deemed acceptable for a Christian polity were judged by biblical standards, experience, and examples. The Reformers looked to the ancient Hebrew polity for God’s example of good government.<sup>77</sup> Both law and government in the newly emerging nation-states of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries had to comport with the “Law of God,” as found in the Bible; and that “Law of God” was reflected in the ancient Hebrew law of “covenant” and polity, as found in the Old Testament. Hence, it goes without saying that ancient Hebrew or Jewish heritage is an important pillar of the Anglo-American constitutional form of government.

For all of the reasons heretofore mentioned, I have dedicated this paper on John Calvin—the Protestant architect of the Western nation state--- to all my Jewish friends on bar and bench and, indeed, to the Jewish community as a whole.<sup>78</sup>

## SUMMARY

This paper, which is a summation of the life and works of John Calvin is Part 3 of a four-part series on the Protestant Christian theology that impacted the Church of England during the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. The Protestant Reformation in England cannot be correctly understood without understanding the ideas of Martin Luther of Germany (1483-1546) and John Calvin of France and Switzerland (1509-1564). And both Luther’s and Calvin’s polemics against the Roman Catholic order cannot be rightly understood without an understanding of St. Augustine’s theology on “justification through faith alone.”<sup>79</sup> For it must be understood that Luther and Calvin did not see themselves as creating a “new holy catholic church,” but instead they considered themselves as preserving the old one. They both believed that the Roman Catholic Church of their day was thoroughly corrupt and had veered away from Catholic teachings, the ancient Catholic Church, the Sacred Scriptures, and the original, ancient teachings of the Church Fathers.

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid., p. 531.

<sup>77</sup> “Can we assign as distinct a function to the Hebrew State? Were important principles as clearly embodied in the civil polity as in the symbols of worship? My answer is, that the one was intended by Jehovah to be a protest against the universal perversion of government, as the other was against the universal corruption of religion.” “The Ancient Hebrew Polity,” *The Presbyterian Quarterly* 12.2 (April 1898): 153-169

<sup>78</sup> See Footnote # 1, above.

<sup>79</sup> See, e.g., Saint Augustine, *On Grace and Free Will* (Louisville, Kentucky: GLH Publishing, 2017).



And they both relied heavily upon the theology of St. Augustine of Hippo in order to lay the theological foundations of the Protestant Reformation in Europe. John Calvin's landmark work, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (discussed in this paper) especially relied on St. Augustine's theology in order to impeach many Roman Catholic liturgical practices and theological doctrines. And the Augustinian monk Martin Luther's famous *Ninety-Five Theses*, which set the Protestant Reformation in motion, and his work *On the Bondage of the Will*, adopted a definition of "justification by faith alone" that is found in St. Augustine's *On Grace and Free Will*, discussed in Part 1 of this paper). In this paper, particularly in the Appendix B, we find that John Calvin thoroughly incorporated both St. Augustine's and Luther's theology on "Grace and Free Will" into his own theology of "predestination" and his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*.

### **Part XXIII. Anglican Church: "Christian Theology and Protestant Dissent in England (1530-1650)" (Part 3)**

The Roman Catholic Church is Europe's oldest institution, and it ought to be revered and respected as the "mother church" of Western Christianity. Today, it is a great Christian institution and remains the largest Christian denomination in the world. It has produced the holiest of Christian servants. It preserved classical Greco-Roman culture and learning during the Middle Ages, developed world-renowned universities, and nurtured western philosophy and jurisprudence. Its orthodox teachings provide profound and extraordinary insight into the life and message of Christ. And, today, both the Pope and the Roman Catholic Church function as the "salt of the earth" in many important areas of life. Nevertheless, since the death of St. Peter, who was the first Pope, the Roman Catholic Church has been rent with political intrigue, political ambition, simony, heresy, corruption, the rise and fall of antipopes, luxury, adultery, fornication, slavery and schism. So that by the late 15<sup>th</sup> century and early 16<sup>th</sup> century, when Martin Luther was born, many of the Roman Catholic Church's theological claims and practices could no longer command widespread obedience and respect among the Catholic faithful. In fact, Luther himself reached the inevitable conclusion that the Roman Catholic Church had become so huge, powerful, and corrupt, that it was also much too arrogant to reform itself from within. The only viable solution for the true Apostolic Holy Catholic Church, which was trapped inside of this Roman Babylon by the Papal Curia, was to sever its ties with the Church of Rome.

When Calvin was born in 1509 and raised and educated in France during the period 1509-1531, he was indoctrinated into the theological conflict between



Luther and the Roman Catholic Church. Indeed, the Reformation hit France when Calvin was a child, so that by the time Calvin reached the university, he was reading Luther's printed speeches then in circulation, especially Luther's *Babylonian Captivity*. Many of Calvin's friends and colleagues came to the conclusion that the Roman Catholic Church needed to be reformed from within; some even converted to the Protestant faith. Calvin seems to have been reluctant to convert from the Roman Catholic faith to the Protestant camp. But some time during the 1530s Calvin's father was excommunicated from the Roman Catholic Church. This may have influenced Calvin, but according to his own account, he received a sudden conversion—a born-again experience—during the late 1520s or early 1530s, which affirmed his belief in the Protestant faith. From that point forward, Calvin had no clear direction but wandered and drifted into towns and cities where man drafted him into the Protestant ministry. Calvin appears to have had no intention of become a pastor, but Providence appears to have put him at the right place, at the right time, where key leaders could recognize his genius and place him into leadership positions within the Reformation movement.

## **Part A. Life and Times of John Calvin**

### **1. Early Years (1509-1520)**

The hallmark of John Calvin's life and work is his life-long theological writing and preaching, as reflected in his monumental book *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. The *Institutes* was written, re-written, published, and re-published over the span of twenty-five years, from 1536 to 1561. The final publication of the *Institutes* thus reflected Calvin's entire life's work in the field of theology and practical church administration. Therefore, in order to truly understand the *Institutes*, it will be helpful to have a quick survey of the life and times of John Calvin.

John Calvin was born to Gerard and Jeanne la Franc on July 10, 1509 in the city of Noyon, France. He had seven siblings, but four of them died during their infancy. Calvin's two surviving siblings were named Charles and Antione. After Calvin's mother died, his father remarried and fathered a daughter, Marie, from his second wife. Their father had originally planned for all three of his sons to enter into the Catholic priesthood. As a result, John Calvin was preparing for the priesthood ever since his early childhood. At age twelve, he was employed by the

local Bishop and received the tonsure.<sup>80</sup> This perhaps proves that Calvin had a natural disposition toward scholarly and religious devotion.

Gerard Calvin had built a successful career as a lawyer and administrator for the Church in Noyon. His connections to the Church opened up educational opportunities for his three boys. Calvin's "father certainly recognized Calvin's talents as a student and provided a fine education for him."<sup>81</sup> While growing up, Calvin became friends of young members of the noble de Hangest family. He would eventually accompany these friends to the University of Paris to continue his education. "Nothing about Calvin's youth was unusual for the time. In fact, Calvin's life was more privileged than most and was not particularly troubled. Calvin's relations with his father and siblings suggest a strong and positive family experience. His lifelong respect for members of the nobility seems in part to reflect his positive experience with the de Hangest family."<sup>82</sup>

## **2. Education (1521-1531)**

In 1521, at age 12, Calvin went to Paris where he studied logic and Latin at the College de Montaigu of the University of Paris.<sup>83</sup> Other subjects which he might of studied are unknown. In 1525 or 1526, at age 16 or 17, Calvin's father ended his studies in preparation for the priesthood. Calvin later recalled that his father changed his plans for him. Instead of studying for the priesthood at the University of Paris, Calvin was moved to Orleans and study at the University of Orleans for a career in civil law.

Since this training in law was of great importance in Calvin's development, it will not be out of place to speak of it rather fully. The *Corpus Iuris Civilis* was undertaken in the reign of Justinian, between the years 529 and 534. It consisted in a thorough arrangement, modernization, and promulgation of previous Roman law and legal

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<sup>80</sup> Tonsure (/ˈtɒŋʃər/) is the practice of cutting or shaving some or all of the hair on the scalp, as a sign of religious devotion or humility. The term originates from the Latin word *tōnsūra* (meaning "clipping" or "shearing"[1]) and referred to a specific practice in medieval Catholicism, abandoned by papal order in 1972. Tonsure can also refer to the secular practice of shaving all or part of the scalp to show support or sympathy, or to designate mourning. Current usage more generally refers to cutting or shaving for monks, devotees, or mystics of any religion as a symbol of their renunciation of worldly fashion and esteem.

<sup>81</sup> W. Robert Godfrey, *John Calvin: Pilgrim and Pastor* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2009), p. 24.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., p. 25.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., p. 26.

writings, and consisted of three works—in order of publication the *Codex*, the *Digesta*, and the *Institutiones*. The *Codex* or Code may be regarded as the heart of the Corpus inasmuch as it was the authoritative statement of Roman law. The *Digesta*, also known as the *Pandecta*, was a massive compilation under subjects of the more important statements of earlier Roman jurists, an historical commentary on the *Codex* without following its ordering. The *Institutiones* formed the elementary (but still authoritative) textbook for law-students. To these three must be added the *Novellae*, laws dealing with problems brought to light in the compiling of the *Digesta* or enacted subsequently to the publication of the *Corpus*....

As early as the first half of the preceding century certain humanists had gone straight to the Corpus, by-passing the medieval accretions. One effect of their method had been to remove the relevance source-book for they read it partly as a linguistic study, partly for the light it could throw on the history and social customs of ancient Rome. Thus, by the time Calvin was reading law, not only were there two opposing methods in law, but the modern school, through Valla, Politien, and Bude, had built up an imposing body of textual, linguistic, and historical studies of the ‘bible’ of the civil law.

We can see what Calvin was working at during these years. The *Institutiones* starts out from a definition of the basic terms, *iustitia*, *iurisprudentia*, *ius natural*, *ius civile* and *ius gentium*, and *lex*. Each of these terms has not only a legal but also a moral or ethical and even a theological significance. *Iustitia*, for example, ‘is the constant and perpetual will that renders to every man his right.’ Jurisprudence ‘is the knowledge of things divine and human, the science of the just and the unjust.’ Fundamentally, therefore, the jurist was concerned with a man’s relationship with his fellows, and that, not only in a practical way, but also in regard to the forces making for unity or discord in society.

Moreover, that it was civil law should not mislead us into thinking that it was therefore secular, non-religious law. Even before

the empire became Christian the connection between religion and law had been intimate. The *ius civile* was, of course, the codification of law in a Christian state.<sup>84</sup>

Calvin was not consumed with studying the relationship between law and religion, but indeed the vast majority of the *ius civile* is concerned with practical matters, contracts, torts, dispute resolution, property rights, etc.<sup>85</sup> Importantly, ideas of Greco-Roman equity and natural law were major components of the *Corpus Juris Civilis*, and Calvin relied heavily upon these legal concepts in his landmark *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. See, e.g., Table 1, “Corpus Juris Civilus (exerts)”

**Table 1. Corpus Juris Civilus (exerts)**

**BOOK I OF THE INSTITUTES, 535 A.D.**

**Book I. Of Persons**

**I. Justice and Law.**

JUSTICE is the constant and perpetual wish to render every one his due.

1. Jurisprudence is the knowledge of things divine and human; the science of the just and the unjust.

2. Having explained these general terms, we think we shall commence our exposition of the law of the Roman people most advantageously, if we pursue at first a plain and easy path, and then proceed to explain particular details with the utmost care and exactness. For, if at the outset we overload the mind of the student, while yet new to the subject and unable to bear much, with a multitude and variety of topics, one of two things will happen---we shall either cause him wholly to abandon his studies, or, after great toil, and often after great distrust to himself (the most frequent stumbling block in the way of youth), we shall at last conduct him to the point, to which, if he had been led by an easier road, he might, without great labor, and without any distrust of his own powers, have been sooner conducted.

3. The maxims of law are these: to live honestly, to hurt no one, to give every one his due.

4. The study of law is divided into two branches; that of public and that of private law. Public law regards the government of the Roman empire; private law, the interest of the individuals. We are now to treat of the latter, which is composed of three elements, and consists of precepts belonging to the natural law, to the law of nations, and to the civil

<sup>84</sup> T.H.L. Parker, *John Calvin: A Biography* (Louisville, K.Y.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), p. 31-33.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid*, p. 33.

law.

## **II. Natural, Common, and Civil Law.**

The law of nature is that law which nature teaches to all animals. For this law does not belong exclusively to the human race, but belongs to all animals, whether of the earth, the air, or the water. Hence comes the union of the male and female, which we term matrimony; hence the procreation and bringing up of children. We see, indeed, that all the other animals besides men are considered as having knowledge of this law.

1. Civil law is thus distinguished from the law of nations. Every community governed by laws and customs uses partly its own law, partly laws common to all mankind. The law which a people makes for its own government belongs exclusively to that state and is called the civil law, as being the law of the particular state. But the law which natural reason appoints for all mankind obtains equally among all nations, because all nations make use of it. The people of Rome, then, are governed partly by their own laws, and partly by the laws which are common to all mankind. We will take notice of this distinction as occasion may arise.

2. Civil law takes its name from the state which it governs, as, for instance, from Athens; for it would be very proper to speak of the laws of Solon or Draco as the civil law of Athens. And thus the law which the Roman people make use of is called the civil law of the Romans, or that of the Quirites; for the Romans are called Quirites from Quirinum. But whenever we speak of civil law, without adding the name of any state, we mean our own law; just as the Greeks, when "the poet" is spoken of without any name being expressed, mean the great Homer, and we Romans mean Virgil. The law of the nations is common to all mankind, for nations have established certain laws, as occasion and the necessities of human life required. Wars arose, and in their train followed captivity and then slavery, which is contrary to the law of nature; for by that law all men are originally born free. Further, by the law of nations almost all contracts were at first introduced, as, for instance, buying and selling, letting and hiring, partnership, deposits, loans returnable in kind, and very many others.

3. Our law is written and unwritten, just as among the Greeks some of their laws were written and others were not written. The written part consists of *leges* (lex), *plebiscita*, *senatusconsulta*, *constitutiones* of emperors, *edicta* of magistrates, and *responsa* of *jurisprudents* [i.e., jurists].

4. A *lex* is that which was enacted by the Roman people on its being proposed by a senatorian magistrate, as a consul. A *plebiscitum* is that which was enacted by the plebs on its being proposed by a plebeian magistrate, as a tribune. The plebs differ from the people as a species from its genus, for all the citizens, including patricians and senators, are comprehended in the *populi* (people); but the plebs only included citizens [who were] not patricians or senators. *Plebiscita*, after the Hortensian law had been passed, began to have the same force as *leges*. Here we find clear evidence of the genius of Roman antiquity and an advanced Roman legal system which clearly reflected the Christian faith. Indeed, under the Emperor Justinian, Christianity was the official religion of the empire and, for this reason, became the foundation of the secular law.

Here, it is important to clarify Calvin's earned academic credentials, as follows:

**Table 2. "Calvin's Academic Awards and Degrees"**

Licentiate-in-Arts (1525)	University of Paris
Master of Arts (1526 or 27)	University of Paris
Bachelor of Laws (1529)	University of Orleans
No academic award granted; Calvin attends lectures in law, theology, and Greek; attends lectures of the renowned Italian humanist jurist Andreas Alciati, (1529-1531); becomes converted to Protestantism.	University of Bourges
Licentiate-in-Laws (1531)	University of Orleans
Doctorate offered/ either refused or not conferred, perhaps due in large measure to Calvin's Protestant beliefs <sup>86</sup>	University of Orleans

At the University of Orleans, Calvin was listed on the faculty as a "lecturer" and a "licentiate-in-laws," which means that he would have been regarded as one of the "*docteurs ordinaires*."<sup>87</sup> In 1531, Calvin published his first book, a commentary on Seneca's *De Clementia*.<sup>88</sup> And in 1531, he was also awarded his licentiate-in-law. Customarily, a holder of the licentiate-in-laws was subsequently awarded the doctorate without further qualifying studies, but this may have been denied or Calvin may have refused accepting the doctorate from the University of Orleans as result of the politics revolving around the Protestant Reformation in 1534.

Calvin appears to have become a serious student of theology as well as law while at the University of Orleans and the University of Bourges (circa 1526-1531). He reports to have experienced an unexpected, sudden conversion to the

<sup>86</sup> "Beza 1 and Calladon report that [Calvin] was more than once offered a doctorate for nothing (which fits in with the Orleans system) but that he refused." *John Calvin: A Biography*, p. 34.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27.



Protestant faith during this period, and “was now reading, it was thought, [Martin Luther’s] Babylonian Captivity and two sermons of Luther’s on the eucharist translated from German into Latin and published in 1524 and 1527.”<sup>89</sup> It also believe that Calvin read Desiderius Erasmus’ *Greek New Testament* as well. “These studies he faithfully undertook at schools in Orleans and Bourges until 1531.”<sup>90</sup>

Calvin’s new studies not only provided him with legal knowledge that was useful to him later in life, they also sharpened his thinking. Furthermore, these studies enabled him to broaden his acquaintance with scholars of his day and led to his growing admiration of Renaissance learning. Bourges was a center of a new approach to studying the law. Here the *Renaissance pursuit of ancient sources* of western thought and of eloquent communication had affected the study of law. The *new approach to learning clearly captivated Calvin*.<sup>91</sup>

The Renaissance was becoming an influential presence in France in the early sixteenth century. It attracted young men particularly for several reasons. In learning it gave them a sense of superiority to their elders. Aesthetically the writings of the ancient Romans and Greeks were much finer and more beautiful than the writings of the medieval. The Renaissance learning not only made men the masters of three languages (Latin, Greek, and Hebrew) but also taught them to write in an eloquent manner that became fashionable in many civic circles. This fashion meant that young men with a Renaissance education could often find desirable positions as secretaries to rich and influential people.

The finest of those educated in the new learning often became editors and commentators on some of the great writings of antiquity. The most celebrated of these scholars in northern Europe was Desiderius Erasmus who provided critical editions of such church fathers as

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid, p. 41.

<sup>90</sup> *John Calvin: Pilgrim and Pastor*, p. 26.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

Jerome and Augustine. Calvin, like many young men, sought to emulate the scholarly achievements of Erasmus.<sup>92</sup>

Calvin's father, Gerard, died from cancer in 1531. Gerard had been excommunicated from the Roman Catholic Church in 1528, apparently because he failed to provide audited financial records in some of his business dealings with the Church. During the time his father's excommunication, Calvin was himself taken up with the winds of Protestant Reformation that came sweeping through France. It is believed that sometime between 1529 and 1534, Calvin was introduced to the writings of Martin Luther:

As a young man Calvin found himself surrounded by many friends and fellow students who were studying the writings of Luther and other reformers. The spiritual and intellectual power of the arguments for reform of the church attracted them. Some of them were converting to Protestantism. Others remained Roman Catholic but became quite critical of some aspects of their church's teaching and hoped to reform it from the inside. In this environment Calvin no doubt came to know a great deal about the thought of the Reformers and was probably persuaded that aspects of the Roman Catholic Church needed changing. But he seems to have resisted and rejected the need to leave the old church for some time.<sup>93</sup>

It is believed that after his father died in 1531, Calvin turned attention away from a legal career to the Renaissance study of non-Christian Greek and Latin authors.

### **3. Impact of Humanism upon Early Development (1529-1534)**

The catholic faith of St. Augustine, as reflected in *The City of God* and *Confessions* appealed to a great sector of 16<sup>th</sup> Century Roman Catholics, who re-opened the vaults of pagan Rome and Greece. Augustine's writings reflected a synthesis of universal human learning outside of the Church, and he was able to thoroughly weave the fundamental message of Christ into it. Augustine could embrace Plato and Aristotle, without losing the supreme doctrine of the Holy Trinity. For this reason, Augustine's writings were a part of that rediscovery of the

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid, pp. 26-27.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., p. 29.

learning from antiquity which took place during the late 15<sup>th</sup> and early 16<sup>th</sup> Centuries.<sup>94</sup> Roman Catholic scholars were then trying to pry open the true meaning of the Scriptures, in light of the original Greek and Hebrew biblical texts, together with a full understanding of the pagan cultures that existed during the times when these ancient writings were first written. Among these Roman Catholic scholars was Desiderius Erasmus (1466- 1536) and Martin Luther (1483-1546). Luther's "theology was Augustinian and a form of Augustinianism was the official faith of the Western church: for many it needed no sacrifice of their intellect or of their faith to side with Martin Luther."<sup>95</sup> Thus, through the writings of Martin Luther, Calvin may have become introduced to St. Augustine's theology. For Calvin quoted St. Augustine in his landmark *Institutes of the Christian Religion* more than any other authority except the Bible.<sup>96</sup>

Thus, it is safe to conclude that the Christian humanists were essentially Augustinian. "The Christian humanists of the fifteenth century believed that they could achieve a synthesis between Christianity and the classical cultures of Greece and Rome, or, if that was going too far, that they could press the old philosophies into the service of the gospel, and all this without disturbing the framework of society. But in the event their activities accelerated the secularization of Europe

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<sup>94</sup> "Augustine was renowned in the Latin-speaking world as a founding father of Christian theology, but his influence proceeds far beyond that. In the *Confessions*, Augustine broke ground by exploring his chosen topic—faith in God—using a tool that had little precedent in prior scholarship: his own life. Equally important, Augustine found

room in the young Christian religion for the highly evolved thought of the so-called pagan philosophers, particularly Plato. This may seem simple enough on its face, but, without exaggeration, Augustine was centuries ahead of his time. The personal nature of the *Confessions* gave everyday relevance to the more abstract elements of Platonic thought and Christian theology, bringing the rival philosophies into harmony and delivering them to millions of readers. Weaving together introspection, classical learning, and faith, Augustine outlined the underpinnings of the Renaissance in Europe, two centuries that followed the Middle Ages and were marked by a 'rebirth' of classical values and humanism, the belief in the dignity of each member of the human race. The Renaissance, according to many scholars, began on the spring day in 1336 when a young poet named Petrarch opened a copy of the *Confessions* and found in it a justification for scanning his own consciousness rather than searching the world for answers to the great questions of life. In some ways, the Renaissance never ended, as the innovations made during that period in art, science, commerce, and politics laid the basis for the world as we recognize today. In many fundamental ways, in the *Confessions* Augustine articulated the soul of modern man." St. Augustine, *Confessions* (New York, NY: Barnes & Noble Books, 2007), p. 293.

<sup>95</sup> *John Calvin: A Biography*, p. 10.

<sup>96</sup> "Especially Augustine. Particularly the influence of the church father Augustine on Calvin was great. Smits (1957-1958) points out meticulously the extent to which Calvin borrowed from Augustine. **The total number of references to Augustine in Calvin's *Institutes* (1559 edition) as identified by Smits runs to 1,175.** For all Calvin's works this number comes to 4 119 (cf. also Mooi, 1965)." *Philosophical and theological influences in John Calvin's thought: reviewing some research results.* B.J. van der Walt School of Philosophy Potchefstroom Campus North-West University POTCHEFSTROOM E-pos: hannah@intekom.co.za.

which the obscurantists were striving to halt. Again, the study of Greek was a thing to be desired to make one wise, not only in the classics, but also in the New Testament and the Greek fathers.”<sup>97</sup> This rediscovery hastened the collapse of Christian superstition then popularized in the late-Medieval Roman Catholic Church. The Renaissance, then, was not anti-Christian or anti-Roman Catholic, but it was anti-superstition. As a consequence, the Christian humanists uncovered many inconsistencies between the Bible and Catholic practices; they uncovered much ecclesiastical corruption; and the Roman Catholic Church’s belief systems were called into question. And, as lucidly set forth in the previous paper within this series, Martin Luther of Germany became the leading spokesman and advocate for Church reform.

By 1500, the ideas expressed in the Protestant Reformation were already beginning to appear in the French Roman Catholic Church and in various universities in Paris, Orleans, and Bourges. By the time John Calvin was born in 1509, the Reformation spirit was already beginning to take shape, so that by the time when Calvin was old enough to read and write, the Protestant Reformation was already in full swing. When Calvin presented to the university during the early 1520s, Martin Luther was already a household name throughout France. Luther’s writings were frequently read, discussed and debated at church and university all over France. This means that Calvin grew up under a dual Christian system: one orthodox and Catholic, and the other revolutionary and reformed. As it turned out, Calvin fell in love with the humanism. In 1529, he chose to study law at the University of Bourges under the renowned Italian humanist jurist Andreas Alciati. The end result was that once Calvin became converted to the Protestant cause, he was uniquely equipped to articulate, defend, and spread the Protestant faith.

#### **4. Sudden Shift towards the Protestant Faith (1529-1534)**

During the same time period, Calvin appears to have drifted towards Lutheran ideas of the Christian faith. Sometime between 1529 and 1534, Calvin seems to have had a “born-again” experience, whereby “‘sudden[ly]’ the truth of the whole program of the Reformation gripped him, and he was converted [to the

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

Protestant faith].”<sup>98</sup> This “born-again” experience radically changed the course of Calvin’s life, for all of the educational preparation which he had received in anticipation for careers for either the priesthood or law would now serve the Protestant Reformation. Thenceforth, Calvin would become a revolutionary for the Protestant Reformation.

In 1533, Calvin returned from a brief hiatus in Noyon to Paris. “During this time, tensions rose at the Collège Royal (later to become the Collège de France) between the humanists/reformers and the conservative senior faculty members. One of the reformers, Nicolas Cop, was rector of the university. On 1 November 1533 he devoted his inaugural address to the need for reform and renewal in the Roman Catholic Church. The address provoked a strong reaction from the faculty, who denounced it as heretical, forcing Cop to flee to Basel. Calvin, a close friend of Cop, was implicated in the offence, and for the next year he was forced into hiding. He remained on the move, sheltering with his friend Louis du Tillet in Angoulême and taking refuge in Noyon and Orléans.”<sup>99</sup> In 1534, Protestant militancy appears to have reached a boiling point. Protestant dissenters placed placards all over France proclaiming that the French Roman Catholic Church needed to reform. Someone even anonymously left a placard in the bedroom of King Francis I. “The king was not pleased. Many leaders of the reforming movement fled from France to avoid arrest, and Calvin was among them.”<sup>100</sup>

In 1534, at age 25, John Calvin’s fate was sealed, for he had left the Roman Catholic Church forever and would in just a few years become a leading figure within the Reformation movement. This road must not have been altogether clear to Calvin at the time. For Calvin he had been educated to work in or for the Roman Catholic University and Church, but now these roads were closed and opportunities as a Protestant were not certain. From between 1531 and 1535, Calvin seems to have been engaged in much internal reflection regarding his education and the Christian faith. The result of that reflection would become a Christian literary classic called *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Here, it should be noted that the word “institutes” carried legal implications, meaning

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<sup>98</sup> “Exactly what led to this sudden conversion is unknown. It may have been some person, some event, some crisis, some reflection, or some combination of these factors.... Calvin’s conversion coincided with a growing militancy in the reforming movement in France.” Ibid., pp. 29-30.

<sup>99</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_Calvin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Calvin)

<sup>100</sup> W. Robert Godfrey, *John Calvin: Pilgrim and Pastor* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2009), p. 30.



“jurisprudence” or “law.” For it was clear that what Calvin had in mind was to carefully delineate the true Christian law of faith and salvation, so that the Protestant doctrine could be both clarified and vindicated. “Under Luther’s influence Calvin had turned from the subjectiveness current in theology and based his theology on the belief that the decisions and judgments of God are the ultimate and real truth about man.”<sup>101</sup> Perhaps through Luther, Calvin may have become introduced to St. Augustine’s theology. For Calvin quoted St. Augustine in the *Institutes* more than any other authority except the Bible.<sup>102</sup>

What would catapult him into Protestant leadership would be the publication of his landmark work *Institutes of the Christian Religion* in 1536, when Calvin was only 26 years old. This would be a life-long project for Calvin; he published it four times during his lifetime, and that last edition, which was published in 1560, was five or six times larger than the first edition from 1536. This first edition of 1536 was only six chapters long,<sup>103</sup> but it effectively summarized Calvin’s Protestant ideals and appeared to succinctly capture those of Luther and other leading Protestants as well. “Calvin’s book lays down most of the basic teachings of the Reformation in a remarkably clear and straightforward way. Calvin had made clear that Christ, faith, justification, the sacraments, and the Scriptures stood at the heart of his understanding of Christianity.”<sup>104</sup> As a result, many Protestant churchmen recognized this book as an important marker for the Protestant movement. “*Institutes of the Christian Religion* created something of a sensation when it was published. Many Protestant leaders recognized in his work a gifted, young man with great potential as a theologian and a writer.”<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> *John Calvin: A Biography*, pp. 56-57.

<sup>102</sup> “Especially Augustine Particularly the influence of the church father Augustine on Calvin was great. Smits (1957-1958) points out meticulously the extent to which Calvin borrowed from Augustine. **The total number of references to Augustine in Calvin’s *Institutes* (1559 edition) as identified by Smits runs to 1,175.** For all Calvin’s works this number comes to 4 119 (cf. also Mooi, 1965).” *Philosophical and theological influences in John Calvin’s thought: reviewing some research results.* B.J. van der Walt School of Philosophy Potchefstroom Campus North-West University POTCHEFSTROOM E-pos: hannah@intekom.co.za.

<sup>103</sup> “The final Latin edition of 1559 (translated into French in 1560) is about five times the length of the original and became an introduction to the study of theology for theological students.” Ibid, p. 33.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., p. 31.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid, p. 33.

## **5. Self-imposed exile to Italy and Geneva (1536)**

It is believed that Calvin spent time in Italy, where he secured employment from the Catholic Princess Renee of France, who was the daughter of King Louis XII, and wife to Hercules II, a son of the Borgia family. At that time, Calvin “had no intention of being a pastor or of undertaking public office. A life of scholarship now seems to have been his aim. But a scholar must have regular employment, and to be secretary to a French princess would provide a living and leisure for study.”<sup>106</sup> While in employment for the princess, rumors spread that members within her court were Protestants and arrest warrants were issued. Although Calvin was not implicated, he decided that to return to France in order to avoid future problems. The year was 1536.

Unfortunately, during that same year, in 1536, Francis I, the king of France, issued the Edict of Coucy, which afforded all Protestant heretics to convert to the orthodox Catholic faith within six months. Calvin had thus fled Italy in order to avoid potential arrest, only to return to France, where he recognized that his days there were numbered. As a consequence, Calvin no longer felt safe in France. “Calvin, concluding that for the foreseeable future France would be shut to him, used less than half of his six months of grace.”<sup>107</sup> In August of 1536, Calvin departed France for Strasborg, Switzerland; however, while in route to Strasborg, he was diverted by military maneuvers<sup>108</sup> to the town of Geneva, which was at that time majority-French and Protestant .

## **6. The City of Geneva in 1538**

The early sixteenth-century City of Geneva laid the foundation upon which John Calvin’s genius as a Protestant reformer could flourish. Geneva was not a part of an independent nation-state in those days, but rather it was a stand-alone outpost of the Holy Roman Empire.<sup>109</sup> Geneva was, in fact, a wall-in military fortress; it was its own city-state. It operated much like the ancient Greek city-states of Athens and Sparta;-- nay, Geneva became ground zero for social, economic and

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<sup>106</sup> *John Calvin: A Biography*, p. 73.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid*, p. 74.

<sup>108</sup> “Unfortunately for them, troop movements made the direct route hazardous, and they were forced to make a detour to the south. This brought them through the city of Geneva, where they put up at an inn for the night.” *Ibid*, p. 74.

<sup>109</sup> T.H.L. Parker, *John Calvin: A Biography* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), pp. 75-90.

religious reform as early as the 1520. At that time, the city had almost 10,000 residents. It was Roman Catholic, and ruled by the Catholic House of Savoy, which controlled the bishopric in Geneva. The House of Savoy was loyal to the Pope and to Charles V, the Holy Roman Emperor. See, e.g., Table 3, “The City of Geneva before 1534.”

**Table 3. The City of Geneva before 1534**

<b>City-State of Geneva</b>	<b>Church of Geneva</b>
Holy Roman Emperor	Pope
House of Savoy	Bishop
Nobility/ Merchants	Roman Catholic Clergy

For the most part, the Bishop of Geneva was the Prince of that city. Beneath the bishop was a two-cameral council: the lords spiritual, or the clerical order of the Genevan Church (i.e., the “canons”)<sup>110</sup>; and the lords temporal, or the bourgeoisie merchants.<sup>111</sup> For it is significant that in 16<sup>th</sup> century Geneva, the merchants (and not the landed nobility) composed the secular nobility—for Geneva was a commercial city. Hence, the House of Savoy controlled the Bishop of Geneva and the Genevan clergy, whereas the rising bourgeoisie Genevan merchants, seeking advantageous trade policies with neighboring city-states such as Bern and Fribourg, sought greater independence from the old regime. At first, the Genevan merchants “were not in favor of evangelical reform.”<sup>112</sup> During the 1520s, these merchants overthrew the Bishop of Geneva and established the *Seigneurie*, a city council. They also took over the clerical offices within the Church of Geneva, and passed a church law “only natives of one the cities of the *combourgeoisie* [Geneva, Bern, or Fribourg] could hold” church office.<sup>113</sup>

Hence, the power of the House of Savoy, the Holy Roman Emperor, and the Pope was shattered in Geneva. “Duke Charles kept up a sporadic military harassing, but the Swiss countered with an army to help the republic.”<sup>114</sup> The

<sup>110</sup> Ibid, p. 77. (NOTE: here, the word “canon” means “a member of the Christian clergy who is on the permanent staff of a cathedral and has specific duties in relation to the running of it.”)

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid, p. 79.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid, p. 78.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

struggle continued on through the year 1535. Duke Charles besieged the city of Geneva, but French aid and help from the neighboring city of Bern saved Geneva from collapse. Hence, the city of Geneva won its independence from grip of the Pope and the Holy Roman Empire. In 1535, there was a power vacuum throughout the halls of power in Geneva; the local government reorganized itself but the Church of Geneva remained in disarray. See, e.g., Table 4, “The City of Geneva in 1535.”

**Tab 4. The City of Geneva in 1535**

<b>City-State of Geneva</b>	<b>Church of Geneva</b>
4 Mayors (Syndics)	-----
25 City Councilmen	-----
200-member General Assembly (legislative body)	Vacant offices in 1535; left open to the Protest Reformers to re-structure a new Church Government

Although the city of Geneva was not deeply loyal to the Pope or the papacy, many of the Genevan merchants may have also been indifferent toward the Protestant struggle as well. But soon the Protestant refugees from France, the Huguenots, presented them with an attractive church plan that was more suitable for the Genevan city-state. Amongst these Huguenots were Antione Froment, Pierre de Wingle, Pierre Viret, Pierre Robert, and William Farel. For it was Farel who would read Calvin’s *Institute of the Christian Religion* and, upon hearing that Calvin had landed in Geneva in August 1536, would impress upon Calvin the value of his talents and Geneva’s need for his assistance. It happened through sheer happenstance, as it were, because Calvin had no desire to stay in Geneva past the next morning, at which time he had planned to make his way to Strasbourg, where he planned a quiet life of study and teaching. But in Geneva, he would need to enter the rough world of politics—Church and State—and to formulate the blueprint of Christian polity that would become the forerunner of the Western nation state.

## **7. Geneva: First Pastoral Ministry (1536-1538)**

When Calvin first arrived in Geneva, it was his intention to stay just one night. However, when news of Calvin’s arrival reached a man named William

Farrel, Calvin's life's work was forever altered. Farrel had been a leader in the French Reformation movement; he had heard about Calvin and had read his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Farrel had been working on building a Protestant congregation in Geneva, and he begged Calvin to stay to Geneva to assist. "Calvin, who reluctantly agreed to remain, later recounted:

Then Farel, who was working with incredible zeal to promote the gospel, bent all his efforts to keep me in the city. And when he realized that I was determined to study in privacy in some obscure place, and saw that he gained nothing by entreaty, he descended to cursing, and said that God would surely curse my peace if I held back from giving help at a time of such great need. Terrified by his words, and conscious of my own timidity and cowardice, I gave up my journey and attempted to apply whatever gift I had in defense of my faith.<sup>115</sup>

And so, from 1536 to 1538, Calvin directed all of his efforts to reforming the Church of Geneva. He was enlisted into the ministry, without ordination and immediately commenced pastoral duties. Hence, Calvin arrived in Geneva in August 1536, and historical records show that by November 1536, he had been elected a "pastor and doctor"<sup>116</sup> of the Church of Geneva.

John Calvin was both thoroughly prepared and uniquely educated to serve the community as a priest or as a lawyer. And, perhaps through Divine Providence, Calvin was uniquely positioned in Geneva to develop, through pastoral care and practical experience the theory and idea of a Christian polity. And from that theory and idea sprang our modern-day idea of the constitutional relationship between Church and State.

In Book IV of his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Calvin left us with his ideas, philosophy, theology, and theories about the proper functioning of the Christian polity. But we must not assume that thought of himself of engaging in political science or even as playing the part of a constitutional lawyer or political theorist. Indeed, Calvin's chief and sole concern about the nature of Church and

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<sup>115</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_Calvin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Calvin)

<sup>116</sup> *John Calvin: A Biography*, p. 80.



State relations was “Christian freedom.”<sup>117</sup> Calvin, as a pastor, was deeply concerned about the Christian flock; and his “doctrine of liberty” was fundamentally Christian. The Christian was free because Christ was their king. “Thus believers acknowledging one king only, ‘their liberator Christ’; they must be ruled by ‘the one law of liberty, the holy word of the gospel.’”<sup>118</sup> Hence, for Calvin, power of the State, within a Christian polity, should have constitutional limitations vis-à-vis the essential demands of Christian liberty. For this reason, during his first two years in Geneva, from 1536-1538, Calvin struggled to impress upon the Geneva city leadership the need for an independent Church of Geneva. Calvin argued that the city government could hold the Church accountable for law violations of the city ordinances and laws, and that it could even prosecute pastors for engaging in criminal violations, but the city government should not meddle into internal church business in efforts to control ordinations, doctrine, or liturgy. Only the church held “the power of the keys” to discipline its churchmen, as Christ had so instructed it to do in Matthew 18:15-17. Calvin right held that discipline was fundamental to the life of the church; for where there is no discipline, the church would cease to exist. But Calvin’s tendency to separate the Church of Geneva from the local government ran into conflict with other Protestant examples, including those of Luther of Germany, Zwingli of Zurich (Switzerland), and Oecolampadius of Basel (Switzerland). “Zwingli’s acceptance of the Christian state and opposition to a separated church led him to a discipline that was the ecclesiastical aspect of civil law and that was enforced by the government.”<sup>119</sup> In Basel, Oecolampadius’s system co-opted the city government into church administration in order to enforce church discipline through civil law, as follows:

A consistory of twelve was set up to administer discipline. It consisted of four ministers, four magistrates, and four representatives of church laymen. Their *modus operandi* was simply to follow Christ’s command. First one member was to go alone to admonish an offender. If he failed, two or three were to go. If still unrepentant, the offender was to be called before the twelve. Finally, he was to be excommunicated. He could release himself from excommunication only by performing penance. This attempt failed through lack of

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<sup>117</sup> Ibid, p. 81.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid, p. 85.

support from other churches, and a modified scheme, depending more on the co-operation of the government, was adopted.<sup>120</sup>

On January 16, 1537, Farel and Calvin laid before the Geneva city council their *Articles on the Organization of the Church and its Worship at Geneva*. These articles:

- Recommend that the Lord's Supper (i.e., the holy communion, or the Eucharist) be held every Sunday;
- Excommunication should be limited only to grave offenses;
- Overseers should be appointed in various areas of the city to monitor the decorum of the citizens and to report serious misconduct to church officials;
- All Genevan citizens must confess the faith, or be excommunicated. City officials must confess the faith in order to hold office;
- Special training for the youth, so that the Christian faith could be passed down from generation to generation;
- Revision to the marriage laws.<sup>121</sup>

The Geneva city council adopted the *Articles*, but implementation of these *Articles* proved cumbersome and problematic. First off, many of Geneva's citizens failed to confess the faith, as required in the *Articles*, and the local magistrate did not enforce this provision. The mentality of the bourgeoisie merchants and traders was not as pious Calvin and Farel had hoped. There was conflict as to precisely how much piety could be imposed upon the average or rank-and-file Genevan citizen. Farel's and Calvin's mandatory *Confession* created serious conflict amongst the city's leaders:

The meeting on 26 November opened stormily. Either Farel or Calvin, it is not clear which, was accused of saying to some councilors that he would rather drink a glass of their blood than drink with them. The bloodthirsty Reformer explained that what had actually happened was that he first remonstrated mildly with them and then, in response to

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<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid, pp. 85-87.

their ‘You wish us nothing but ill’, replied, ‘I wish you so much ill that I would shed my blood for you’. A councilor reported that some of them had been called perjured for swearing to a mere written confession. The Reformers replied that this was the wrong way to look at it. What was asked was a solemn oath to keep to the faith of God and to follow his commandments, as had been done in Nehemiah and Jeremiah—in other words, a solemn renewing of the covenant. The council said that the Bernese commissioners called it perjury. The upshot of the matter was that another committee was appointed to look into it, and Farel and Calvin went to Bern with explanations.<sup>122</sup>

For all practical purposes, the Church of Bern appeared to be the senior church over the Church of Geneva. At least the Genevan city government left that impression, because they consulted with the Church of Bern for advice on how to respond to Farel’s and Calvin’s recommendations. If the Church of Bern gave a conflicting opinion or recommendation, then the Genevan city council simply overruled Farel’s and Calvin’s position. This created great conflict, causing relations between the Genevan local pastors and the Genevan local government to deteriorate. This conflict reached a boiling point on Easter Sunday, 1538, when, in protest against the city council’s unilateral prescription for the conduct of the Eucharist, Farel and Calvin simply refused to issue the bread and the wine to the communicants. This created quite a stir. As a consequence, Farel and Calvin were both banned from the city of Geneva.

Farel and Calvin then went to Bern and Zurich to plead their case. The resulting synod in Zurich placed most of the blame on Calvin for not being sympathetic enough toward the people of Geneva. It asked Bern to mediate with the aim of restoring the two ministers. The Geneva council refused to readmit the two men, who then took refuge in Basel.<sup>123</sup>

In June 1538, Farel and Calvin left Geneva, and settled in the city of Basel.

Subsequently, Farel received an invitation to lead the church in Neuchâtel. Calvin was invited to lead a church of French refugees in

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<sup>122</sup> Ibid, p. 88.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

Strasbourg by that city's leading reformers, Martin Bucer and Wolfgang Capito. Initially, Calvin refused because Farel was not included in the invitation, but relented when Bucer appealed to him. By September 1538 Calvin had taken up his new position in Strasbourg, fully expecting that this time it would be permanent; a few months later, he applied for and was granted citizenship of the city.<sup>124</sup>

Calvin was 28 years old when he left Geneva in 1538. He later recalled that he had felt as though his ministry in Geneva was a failure. ““After that calamity, when my ministry seemed to me to be disastrous and unsuccessful, I made up my mind never again to enter on any ecclesiastical charge whatever unless the Lord should call me to it by a clear and manifest call. He would settle in Basel for the present until he understood what God wanted him to do.”<sup>125</sup> Farel and Calvin each received offers to pastor churches in different locations; Farel was called to Neuchatel, and Calvin was called to Stasbourg.<sup>126</sup>

## **8. Strasbourg: Second Pastoral Ministry (1538-1541)**

That Calvin's and Farel's ministries were split apart from each other did not bode well with Calvin, for he almost rejected his call to the ministry in Strasbourg, because Farel would not be accompanying him. On the other hand, Martin Bucer (1491-1551), who was the man who had extended the offer for Calvin to come to Strasbourg, was an important man in the history of the Protestant Reformation and one whom Calvin rightly understood could teach him the ropes of ministry:

Martin Bucer (1491-1551), the leading minister in Strasbourg and a distinguished reformer, invited Calvin to become the pastor of the French refugee congregation in the German-speaking city of Strassburg.<sup>127</sup> Calvin hesitated, uncertain that he wanted to take up pastoral work again so soon after the troubles in Geneva.

Bucer was a man to whom Calvin felt he must listen. He was a noted pastor and theologian in the first generation of the Reformation. As a young monk in 1518 he had heard Martin Luther preach and had been

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<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid, p. 91.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

<sup>127</sup> The correct spelling is “Strasbourg.”

deeply impressed with Luther in those early days of Luther's growing fame after posting the Ninety-five Theses in 1517. Bucer had guided Strassburg into as a key point of contact between the Lutherans in Germany and the Reformation in Switzerland. He believed passionately in the cause of Protestant unity and worked fervently to reconcile the Lutherans and the Reformed. As part of this effort, he had attended the meeting of Martin Luther with Ulrich Zwingli (1484-1531) in Marburg in 1529 where they had tried to find agreement on the Lord's Supper.

Bucer saw in Calvin a future leader for reform with great talent. When Calvin hesitated, Bucer used language similar to that employed by Farel two years earlier. Bucer warned Calvin not to be a Jonah, running away from the call of the Lord. So Calvin again heard the voice of God in the thunderings of his friends and took up pastoral responsibilities in Strassburg.<sup>128</sup>

Calvin remained in Strasbourg from 1538 to 1541. Although his salary was limited, he gained three great advantages. First, the German-speaking Strasbourg city council gave Calvin free reign to run the French-speaking refugee church as Calvin desired. Second, Calvin learned a lot from his senior colleague Bucer, who helped to catapult Calvin on the international stage.<sup>129</sup> And, third, Calvin now had additional time to write and to further develop his theology. The second edition of his *Institutes of the Christian Religion* was published in 1541. These three advantages were turning points in Calvin's career as a pastor. Lastly, but not least, Calvin met and married his first and only wife, Idelette de Bure, while he was living in Strasbourg.

As previously mentioned, Bucer placed Calvin into high-visibility leadership positions on the world stage.<sup>130</sup> "Increasingly leaders looked to him as spokesman

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<sup>128</sup> W. Robert Godfrey, *John Calvin: Pilgrim and Pastor* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2009), pp. 43-44.

<sup>129</sup> "As the church seemed to be breaking into three camps—Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and Reformed—various efforts were made to heal the divisions. In the years when Calvin was in Strasbourg, he was involved in a variety of colloquies or conferences held in various places to bring peace to the church. In the years 1539-1541 Emperor Charles V, himself a devout Roman Catholic, called several meetings to discuss differences in theology. Four separate meetings were held at the behest of the emperor. Bucer sent Calvin as an observer to the first two of these meetings in 1539 and 1540." *John Calvin: Pilgrim and Pastor*, p. 48.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*



for the French-speaking Reformed world.”<sup>131</sup> “By 1541 Calvin’s life seemed to have found stability and productivity. He was happily married and had produced several important writings. His pastoral work was appreciated, and his talents as a theologian and a representative of the Reformed faith were being widely recognized throughout Europe.”<sup>132</sup>

Meanwhile, the Church of Geneva, which was still rent with dissensions, was falling apart. In September 1540, the Geneva city council held a meeting and voted to invite Calvin to return to Geneva. Calvin peremptorily refused. The Geneva city council asked Farel to weigh in on the matter and to use his influence to persuade Calvin to return to Geneva. “Farel wrote a letter that Calvin called ‘thundering,’ insisting that Calvin was a minister of the church in Geneva and must return to take up his responsibilities there. Farel even traveled from his church in Neuchatel, Switzerland to Strassburg to plead with Calvin face-to-face. With great reluctance Calvin accepted Farel’s advice again.”<sup>133</sup>

## **9. Geneva: Third and Final Ministry (1541-1564)**

In 1541, Calvin returned to Geneva a much more confident and mature pastor. This time, the Geneva city council would listen to him. Calvin brought back to Geneva many of Bucer’s church programs.

In supporting Calvin's proposals for reforms, the council of Geneva passed the *Ordonnances ecclésiastiques* (Ecclesiastical Ordinances) on 20 November 1541. The ordinances defined four orders of ministerial function: pastors to preach and to administer the sacraments; doctors to instruct believers in the faith; elders to provide discipline; and deacons to care for the poor and needy. They also called for the creation of the *Consistoire* (Consistory),<sup>134</sup> an ecclesiastical court composed of the lay elders and the ministers. The city government retained the power to summon persons before the court, and the

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<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid, p. 50.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid, pp. 57-58.

<sup>134</sup> Calvin’s Consistory was another ecclesiastical device which he learned from Bucer. “Elders, with ministerial participation, met weekly as the Consistory to consider disciplinary matters in order to regulate and improve the moral life in Geneva. They dealt with a wide range of issues, from public drunkenness to adultery. The elders also visited families before every quarterly Communion.” Ibid, p. 59.

Consistory could judge only ecclesiastical matters having no civil jurisdiction. Originally, the court had the power to mete out sentences, with excommunication as its most severe penalty. The government contested this power and on 19 March 1543 the council decided that all sentencing would be carried out by the government.<sup>135</sup>

Calvin returned to Geneva with a devoted heart. His schedule was inhuman: he preached, wrote, published, counseled, and reformed the Church of Geneva.<sup>136</sup> The city council in 1542 observed that Calvin's preaching schedule was so heavy that it ordered him to reduce his load in order to preserve his health. But Calvin could not refrain himself from taking part in ministry.

#### **a. Opposition to Godly Society in Geneva (1546-1558)**

It has been credibly argued that Calvin's Geneva was a "theocracy." And the Italian writer Voltaire had written that if Calvin had intended to close the monastery, it was because he wanted to convert the entire society into a monastery. Indeed, Calvin had built quite a notorious reputation for being an austere Christian and a theological disciplinarian. By 1546, opposition to Calvin's austere discipline broke out in Geneva. This was not surprising, for Geneva was a commercial center, and its prosperous, middle-class merchants were not about to substitute the tyranny of the Pope for the tyranny of Calvinism. Author T.H.L. Parker described their attitude and behavior as "opposition to a godly society."<sup>137</sup> And so many of them rebelled against Calvin's doctrines. Calvin referred to them as the "Libertines," because they held to the position that, once a person is "born-again," he does not need to come underneath the slavery of ecclesiastical discipline.

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<sup>135</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_Calvin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Calvin)

<sup>136</sup> "During his ministry in Geneva, Calvin preached over two thousand sermons. Initially he preached twice on Sunday and three times during the week. This proved to be too heavy a burden and late in 1542 the council allowed him to preach only once on Sunday. In October 1549, he was again required to preach twice on Sundays and, in addition, every weekday of alternate weeks. His sermons lasted more than an hour and he did not use notes. An occasional secretary tried to record his sermons, but very little of his preaching was preserved before 1549. In that year, professional scribe Denis Raguénier, who had learned or developed a system of shorthand, was assigned to record all of Calvin's sermons. An analysis of his sermons by T. H. L. Parker suggests that Calvin was a consistent preacher and his style changed very little over the years.[43][44] John Calvin was also known for his thorough manner of working his way through the Bible in consecutive sermons. From March 1555 to July 1556, Calvin delivered two hundred sermons on Deuteronomy." [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_Calvin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Calvin)

<sup>137</sup> Ibid, pp. 124-145.

By 1547, the majority of the city's majors (i.e., syndics) had also turned against Calvin and had joined the Libertines. The struggle against Calvin grew quite serious. One Libertine was prosecuted for treason and beheaded, after he was tried and found guilty of writing and sending threatening letters to pastors. This capital punishment did little to stop the Libertines; they continued to oppose Calvin's Consistory; to heckle the pastors during church service; to foment gossip and controversy; and to challenge Calvin's authority. In 1552, a Libertine was elected the chief mayor (i.e., syndic), and Calvin's authority and influence then seemed at its lowest point. He asked to resign as pastor, but the city council refused to accept his resignation.

**b. The Heretic Michael Servetus (1553-1555)**

In 1553, a man named Michael Servetus showed up in Geneva. Servetus was a known heretic throughout Europe:

Servetus was a Spanish physician and Protestant theologian who boldly criticised the doctrine of the Trinity and paedobaptism (infant baptism). In July 1530 he disputed with Johannes Oecolampadius in Basel and was eventually expelled. He went to Strasbourg, where he published a pamphlet against the Trinity. Bucer publicly refuted it and asked Servetus to leave. After returning to Basel, Servetus published *Two Books of Dialogues on the Trinity* (Latin: *Dialogorum de Trinitate libri duo*) which caused a sensation among Reformers and Catholics alike. The Inquisition in Spain ordered his arrest.

Calvin and Servetus were first brought into contact in 1546 through a common acquaintance, Jean Frellon of Lyon; they exchanged letters debating doctrine; Calvin used a pseudonym as Charles d'Espeville; Servetus left his unsigned. Eventually, Calvin lost patience and refused to respond; by this time Servetus had written around thirty letters to Calvin. Calvin was particularly outraged when Servetus sent him a copy of the *Institutes of the Christian Religion* heavily annotated with arguments pointing to errors in the book. When Servetus mentioned that he would come to Geneva, 'Espeville' (Calvin) wrote a letter to Farel on 13 February 1546 noting that if

Servetus were to come, he would not assure him safe conduct: ‘for if he came, as far as my authority goes, I would not let him leave alive.’

In 1553 Servetus published *Christianismi Restitutio* (English: The Restoration of Christianity), in which he rejected the Christian doctrine of the Trinity and the concept of predestination.

And so when Servetus appeared in Geneva, both Calvin and the Libertines now found a common enemy to whom their energy and attention could be directed. His presence in Geneva caused quite a stir. Servetus was arrested and imprisoned on charges of “heresy.” The Geneva city counsel summoned the advice from theologians from throughout Europe for advice on how to handle the situation and the responses unanimously held that Servetus should be executed. Servetus was tried, and Calvin served as the prosecutor. Servetus was tried, found guilty, and sentenced to be burned at the stake until death. Calvin asked that his sentence be to beheading. During the meanwhile, Servetus asked to recant, in order to spare his life, but he refused. The council decided that Servetus should burn, and on October 27, 1553, Servetus as burned to death at the stake.

### **c. The Consistory and the Libertines (1553-1558)**

Following the execution of Servetus, Calvin turned his attention to re-establishing and re-affirming the powers of the Consistory. The Consistory was a committee of elders who had power to enforce ecclesiastical discipline up to, and including, excommunication. The Libertines had opposed the Consistory, and stripped it of many of its powers, including the power to excommunicate. By 1553, many French refugees had become full-fledge Genevan citizens and tended to support Calvin. In 1554, they elected a pro-Calvin general assembly and city council.

In 1555, the Libertines expressed open hostility towards the newly-elected pro-Calvin majors (i.e., syndics). Several arrests were made, and even a few Libertines were executed due to the radical positions that they had taken. By 1555, the Libertine opposition was crushed, and the opposition to Calvin’s Christian polity ceased. By 1555, Calvin’s Geneva has finally eclipsed Zurich as the chief center of the Reformation in Switzerland. And for the next nine years until his death in 1564, John Calvin would become the unquestioned leader of third major

branch of Christendom: the continental Reformed Church. It was during this period, from 1555 to 1564, that Calvin's influence upon Scotland, England, and France was most impactful.

**d. The International Reformation in Scotland, England, and France (1555-1564)**

John Calvin took great interest in the revolutionary events taking place within the Church of England, during the reigns of Kings Henry VIII (1491-1547), Edward VI (1537-1553) and Queens Mary I (1516-1558), and Elizabeth I (1533-1603). In England, the leader of the Reformation was Archbishop Thomas Cranmer (1489-1556) who pioneered several reforms from within the Church of England, including liturgical changes and the publication of his *Book of Common Prayer*. Bishop Cranmer had wanted to summon Protestant leaders to a conference in order to unify the Reformation movement. Calvin wrote Bishop Cranmer and expressed his interest in such a project. After Henry VIII's death in 1547, the Duke of Somerset served as the first "Protector" in England during the reign of Edward VI. Calvin wrote letters to the Duke of Somerset, some of which "contained a complete scheme for reforming the English church:

The first letter was, indeed, a little treatise running to some five thousand words. Its chief recommendations were: that provision should be made for the preaching of the gospel, that abuses should be eradicated and some form of discipline should be established. He wrote Somerset other letters on specific points of church organization and also dedicated to him his *I Timothy*. As we have already seen, to the young king he dedicated both his Isaiah and the Catholic Epistles; but Edward was never to have a chance to put into effect the advice he received, for he died in 1553, to be succeeded by his sister Mary.<sup>138</sup>

When the Catholic Queen Mary I ascended to the throne of England, Protestant hopes and fortunes there were reversed. Archbishop Cranmer was executed, and hundreds of English Protestants fled to Geneva, Switzerland, where Calvin gave them refuge. "Calvin sheltered Marian exiles (those who fled the reign of Catholic Mary Tudor in England) in Geneva starting in 1555. Under the

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<sup>138</sup> John Calvin: A Biography, p. 175.



city's protection, they were able to form their own reformed church under John Knox and William Whittingham and eventually carried Calvin's ideas on doctrine and polity back to England and Scotland.”<sup>139</sup> For it was essentially through these English Protestant refugees in Geneva that Calvin’s influence upon the Church of England was immense.

The influence wielded by Calvin in England for the next forty years was enormous, but it was by means of his numerous works, especially the *Institutio* (translated in 1561) but also the translations of his commentaries and sermons. Moreover, he never exercised a direct influence through, so to say, the official channels, even though leading statesmen and churchmen, including some archbishops, were strong Calvinists. In the controversies between the church of England and the Puritans and Separatists, the position of Calvin is far from clear. A close study might well show that it was the champions of the established church who claimed his support and that their opponents relied rather on Bullinger and Beza.

His influence in Scotland, immense as it was, was nevertheless still not direct but mediated through his personal relationship with Knox in Geneva and through his writings. After Knox had returned to Scotland in 1559, he organized reform according to the pattern of Geneva, with local adjustments but he very rarely sought Calvin’s advice. His liturgy was close to Calvin’s and the Scottish 1560 Confession of Faith might be regarded as a restatement of Calvin’s theology....<sup>140</sup>

John Knox, in fact, learned the Presbyterian form of church polity from John Calvin. Calvin support Knox’s efforts in Scotland and England. Calvin even lent his opinion and criticism of the 1552 *Book of Common Prayer* as “unsuitable.” This was, of course, during the reign of Edward VI. When Mary Tudor ascended the throne of England in 1553, the English Reformation can to an abrupt halt.

#### **e. The First French Civil War of Religion (1562-1563)**

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<sup>139</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_Calvin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Calvin)

<sup>140</sup> *John Calvin: A Biography*, pp. 177-178.

At the same time, France, Francis I's successor, King Henri II, began to crack down on the French Protestants. Heresy trials were brought back to France; jurisdiction over heresy was removed from the ecclesiastical courts to the civil courts; a "reign of terror ensued comparable to the fearful years in England under Mary Tudor. Attempts to establish an even tighter inquisition on the Spanish pattern were rejected by the *Parlement* of Paris, but this made little difference to the severity of the persecution."<sup>141</sup>

Meanwhile, "Calvin called upon French evangelical Christians to stand firm."<sup>142</sup> Hence, during the years 1555- 1562, Calvin was the Evangelical leader of the oppressed Protestant dissenters in Scotland, England, and France. Not only did Calvin shelter their leaders, such as John Knox, in Geneva, but he became their spiritual advisor and counselor. Protestant theologians and pastors were being arrested, interrogated, and imprisoned in France and England, and soon Calvin was presented with the question of "armed resistance."

Like Martin Luther before him, Calvin had to deal with the problem of applying Christian principles to government-sponsored suppression and terror. And, like Luther, Calvin also had to grapple with the growing problem of class-consciousness and economic discontent among the lower classes. "Calvin was sounded as to his opinions on active revolt."<sup>143</sup> Calvin "made it clear that he was ... against the use of force,"<sup>144</sup> and he "would not sanction armed force."<sup>145</sup> However, the French Protestants, unlike the German Peasants of Luther's day (i.e., 1525), were led by many nobleman who were unused to tyranny.

In 1562, the first of the French Civil Wars of Religion broke out, and Calvin was forced to come to the aid of French Protestants. He encouraged the Genevan city council to loan them money, men and material. "When the war ended with the Peace of Amboise in April 1563, he was again angry at the bad terms that the Huguenots had accepted. But when he spoke of God giving his followers a second chance of employing themselves in his service, he did not mean another war, for 'I shall always give my advice to abstain from arms, and that all of us should perish

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<sup>141</sup> Ibid, p. 179.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid, p. 182.

rather than have recourse a second time to the disorders which we have witnessed.”<sup>146</sup>

When the first French Civil War broke out in 1562, Calvin had gained diplomatic favor in England. Queen Elizabeth I had ascended to the throne of England in 1558. Calvin had dedicated his revised edition of Isaiah to her, referring to her as “The Most Serene Queen, splendid for her virtues no less than for her royal glory, the Lady Elizabeth, Queen of England and Sovereign Lady in Ireland, and the circumjacent isles.”<sup>147</sup> The French Huguenots had supported Elizabeth I of England and John Knox of Scotland. But because the relationship between John Knox and Elizabeth I was somewhat strained, the situation was not a perfect one. Elizabeth I, however, was a supreme diplomat who was able to alleviate the various factions among the Protestants, that is to say, the conflict between the Anglicans, Presbyterians, and the Puritans. This conflict within the Church of England would not ripen into open revolt until the next century, for Elizabeth I died in 1603.

For this reason, Calvin’s greatest indirect influence upon the English church and society would not emerge until the next century (i.e., 1600 through 1700). The true heirs of Calvinism in Scotland were the Presbyterians; and in England, they were the Puritans. Together, the Presbyterians and the Puritans would utilize Calvin’s ideas in order to lobby for reform within the Church of England (i.e., 1600-1700) and to wage civil war to achieve their objectives (e.g., the English Civil War 1642-1651).

## **Part B.      *Institutes of the Christian Religion: Christian Theology of John Calvin (Books, Sermons and Other Writings)***

Unlike Martin Luther, John Calvin did not engage in acrimonious debates with Popes, Cardinals, Archbishops, and Monarchs; Calvin had no bounty on his head and no arrest warrants; and he was not the subject of any serious criminal charges or trials. Therefore, his impact upon Europe and the world is a lot less dramatic than Luther’s. On the other hand, much like St. Augustine of Hippo, Calvin was a quiet intellectual, scholar, and a very forceful, persuasive writer.

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<sup>146</sup> Ibid, p. 183.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid, p. 177.

Calvin had a unique talent and ability that allowed him to synthesize and to interpret the Bible, canon laws, and historical documents, in manner that few others could accomplish. When he published his first edition of the *Institutes of the Christian Religion* in 1536, at age twenty-six, there simply was no other similar document—not even Luther’s writings—that so clearly and thoroughly described the Protestant theological position. Up that time, there had been many sporadic statements and summaries of the Protestant position, but only Calvin’s *Institutes* cut to the core the theological differences between the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant faith. As a consequence, Calvin immediately won the respect of Luther and nearly all of the French Huguenots in France, Germany, and Switzerland. The *Institutes* went through four publications during Calvin’s lifetime, in 1536, 1541, 1559, and 1560, respectively. Thematically, Calvin aimed to tailor the new Protestant faith around the Apostle’s Creed, circa 390 A.D., which states:

I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
 creator of heaven and earth.  
 I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
 who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
 born of the Virgin Mary,  
 suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
 was crucified, died, and was buried;  
 he descended to the dead.  
 On the third day he rose again;  
 he ascended into heaven,  
 he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
 and he will come to judge the living and the dead.  
 I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
 the holy catholic Church,  
 the communion of saints,  
 the forgiveness of sins,  
 the resurrection of the body,  
 and the life everlasting. Amen.

Calvin’s *Institutes* was divided into four books. Each of these four books, at least in theory, was designed to correlate to one particular aspect of the Apostle’s Creed, as follows:

**Table 5. “The Apostle’s Creed and the Institutes of the Christian Religion”**

Topic	Apostle’s Creed	Calvin’s Institute of the
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		<b>Christian Religion</b>
<b>God</b>	I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.	<b>Book I:</b> The Knowledge of God
<b>Jesus Christ</b>	I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.	<b>Book II:</b> The Knowledge of God the Redeemer in Christ, First Disclosed to the Fathers Under the Law, and Then to Us in the Gospel
<b>The Holy Spirit</b>	I believe in the Holy Spirit,	<b>Book III:</b> The Way in Which We Receive the Grace of Christ: What Benefits Come to Us From It, and What Effects Follow
<b>The Holy Catholic Church</b>	I believe in..., the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.	<b>Book IV:</b> The External Means or Aids by Which God Invites Us Into the Society of Christ & Holds Us Therein

However, when one reads the *Institutes*, it will become immediately obvious that the texts of each of the four books do not maintain the integrity of this correlation to the Apostle's Creed. Calvin is quite honestly unable to discuss God, without discussing Christ, the Holy Spirit, or the Church, and vice versa. Therefore, each of the four books within the *Institutes* includes discussions on theology subject matter that crosses over into the other three books, so that the best method of reading the *Institutes* is to make a list of the major themes discussed within the book, and read all four books simultaneously. For example, within the *Institutes*, the following theological topics can be read within each of the four books:

1. Christian Polity
2. Grace and Free Will

3. The Essence of God
4. The Holy Trinity
5. God as Justice
6. The Human Conscience
7. Natural Law
8. Idolatry in Roman Catholicism
9. The True Catholic Church

Therefore, the best method to study the *Institutes* is through utilizing the index in the back of the book, select a particular theological subject, and read all of the pages covering that subject. See, e.g., attached Appendix 1, “Christian Theology of John Calvin: Major Tenets.” Another source of information is to select several of Calvin’s printed sermons. These sermons are methodically organized and shed substantial light upon Calvin’s theology. For example, in Appendix 1, the section on “Slavery” was taken not from the *Institutes*, but wholly from Calvin’s printed sermons.

For American historians and constitutional scholars, Calvin’s Book IV and discussion on the “Christian Polity” should be of significant interest. In Book IV, Calvin describes the proper function of the Church and State; the function of the magistrate as God’s vice-regent; the independence of the Church from the State; the nature of law; the proper use and function of the secular court system; and the preferred form of constitutional government. See Appendix 1-A, “On Christian Polity.”

Although not discussed in the *Institutes*, but closely tied to Calvin’s idea of the Christian polity, were his views on slavery. These were littered throughout Calvin’s voluminous sermons, which were recorded and later published. Calvin acknowledged the institution of slavery, did not think that it was unlawful but a necessary evil, which Christians must regulate with the ultimate aim of manumission of slaves. However, Calvin certainly argued with support from the Scripture that true Christians could maliciously reduce, keep, and hold innocent human beings in a state of slavery. Instead, slavery was restricted as punishment for crimes, but on the whole slavery should be abolished as a matter of course within the Christian polity. See Appendix 1-H, “On Human Slavery.”



The *Institutes* also reveals, in substantial detail, Calvin's thoughts on the subject of Grace and Free Will. In summary, he adopts St. Augustine's theological ideals verbatim. But Calvin's ideas on "predestination" seem to go a step further than Augustine; for Calvin asserts that through God's prescience some people are doomed to eternal damnation. Although Calvin insists that he does not in any manner deviate from Augustine, others have since described Calvin's doctrine on predestination to be quite different and unique. See Appendix 1-B, "On Grace and Free Will."

Calvin's understanding of God's essence leaves no room for civil or secular law that is not in nature subordinate to God's Providence. Calvin simply did not conceptualize a constitutional arrangement where the civil magistrate did not operate as God's vice-regent, or where the civil laws were not subordinate to the dictates of equity, which Calvin clearly defines as the will of God and the natural law. See, e.g., Appendix 1-C, "On the Essence of God," and Appendix 1-G, "On the Natural Law."

In Calvin's theology, God's essence is a monotheistic Holy Trinity, which includes God as the eternal cause; God as wisdom and the active logos; and God as force and power. The proper names for these three essences are Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. See, e.g., Appendix 1-D, "On the Holy Trinity." Calvin describes God as omniscient and omnipotent, and God's fundamental essence is justice. See, e.g., Appendix 1-E, "On God as Justice." Moreover, God's presence is inside of every human being and is manifested as the "conscience." Calvin thus observes that when the human conscience is moved toward fear, shame, embarrassment, guilt and the like, it actually harkens back to the Original Sin that was first committed in the Garden of Eden. These emotions show that human being's internal spirit is connected to God the creator. Therefore, no human being is without excuse for their sins, and everyone deserves divine punishment and eternal damnation. For Calvin, mankind's only hope is in the redemptive power of Christ's death and resurrection. See, e.g., Appendix 1-B, "On Grace and Free Will," and Appendix 1-F, "On the Human Conscience."

Calvin's primary reason for writing the *Institutes* was to refute Roman Catholic theology and ecclesiology. This he does quite voluminously and forcefully through the entire text of the *Institutes*. See, e.g., Appendix 1-I, "On

Idolatry in Roman Catholicism,” and Appendix 1-J, “On the True Catholic Church.”

## CONCLUSION

In *On Grace and Free Will*, Saint Augustine of Hippo, a doctor of the Roman Catholic Church, sets forth a simple and cogent argument for the doctrine of “justification through faith alone, and not works.” This argument was embraced by Martin Luther and utilized in his famous *Ninety-Five Theses*, which launched the Protestant Reformation in Europe. Soon thereafter, two of the Protestant Reformation’s greatest leaders, Martin Luther and John Calvin, incorporated St. Augustine’s theology on ecclesiology, law, and the doctrine of justification through faith alone into their polemics which they used as the basis for separation from the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>148</sup> This movement to democratize the Roman Catholic Church laid the foundation for democratic government and theory in Europe.

Indeed, when Luther sought to democratize the Roman Catholic Church, with theories such as the “justification by faith alone,” “the priesthood of all believers,” “Sola Scriptura,” “the right of the Christian faithful to judge and select pastors and bishops,” etc., he unwittingly laid the foundations for the modern Western democratic nation-state and modern-day constitutional law. That foundation was solidified throughout Western Europe with John Calvin’s *Institutes of the Christian Religion*.

When Calvin published his first edition of the *Institutes* in 1536, at age twenty-six, there simply was no other similar document—not even Luther’s writings—that so clearly and thoroughly described the Protestant theological position. Up that time, there had been many sporadic statements and summaries of the Protestant position, but only Calvin’s *Institutes* cut to the core the theological differences between the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant faith. As a

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<sup>148</sup> As St. Augustine has stated in *The City of God*, the true church is hidden both within and outside of organized, man-made churches. The “true church” is actually immersed inside of all church denominations. And so, too, is “church corruption, heresy, and schism” equally immersed inside of all church denominations. For this reason, this essay should not be construed as anti-Roman Catholic; for what happened inside of the Roman Catholic Church during the 15th and 16th century has, and can, occur inside of every church denomination and every secular, non-sectarian organization.

consequence, Calvin immediately won the respect of Protestant Reformation leaders. The *Institutes* went through four publications during Calvin's lifetime, in 1536, 1541, 1559, and 1560, respectively, and would have a profound influence on the English dissenters, including the Puritans, Presbyterian, Baptists, Separatists, etc.

In England, where the Anglican Church retained intact nearly all of Church of Rome's liturgy and dogma, the influence of John Calvin would have a significant impact upon the English Protestant dissenters throughout the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. John Calvin had maintained throughout his career close ties to the English Protestants, including Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury and author of the Book of Common Prayer; the Duke of Somerset, regent to Edward VI, John Knox, the leader of the Scottish Protestants; Queen Elizabeth I. Two of Calvin's books were dedicated to Edward VI and one was dedicated to Elizabeth I. This shows that not only did Calvin have an interest in international affairs but he had a keen interest in seeing English Protestantism succeed. Today, the Church of England lists Calvin on its liturgical calendar as a "saint" and leader of the Protestant Reformation.

**THE END**

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# **Appendix 1**

## **“Theology of John Calvin: Major Tenets”**



**Appendix 1-A.**  
**THEOLOGY OF JOHN CALVIN:**  
***On Christian Polity***

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In Book IV, Chapter Twenty of the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Calvin set out to describe the “laws by which Christian polity is to be governed”<sup>149</sup> and to answer the question, “What are the laws by which Christian polity is to be regulated?”<sup>150</sup>

In Calvin’s ideal Christian commonwealth, “the law of Moses” must be taken into account. To do that, one must divine the Law of Moses into three parts: the moral law, the ceremonial law, and the judicial law. The moral law is represented in the Ten Commandments and is “contained under two heads, the one of which simply enjoins us to worship God with pure faith and piety, the other to embrace men with sincere affection” and is “the true and eternal rule of righteousness prescribed to the men of all nations and of all times, who would frame their life agreeably to the will of God.”<sup>151</sup> Borrowing heavily from the Catholic and natural law traditions, Calvin concluded that there were universal moral laws that, howsoever they may be slightly and differently manifested in different cultures and societies, binding on all nations.<sup>152</sup> In *Confessions*, St. Augustine certainly sets for the same principle as does Calvin, where he writes:

Can it ever, at any time or place, be unrighteous for a man to love god with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his mind; and his neighbor as himself? Similarly, offenses against nature are everywhere and at all times to be held in detestation and should be punished.... [A]nd, even if all nations should commit [offenses against nature]<sup>153</sup>, they would all be judged guilty of the same crime

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<sup>149</sup> Ibid, p. 534.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid, p. 529.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid, p. 534.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> Here, St. Augustine uses the “Sodomites” as an example of a crime against nature, stating the God “has not made men so that they should ever abuse one another in that way.” St. Augustine, *Confessions* (New York, N.Y.: Barnes & Nobles Classics, 2007), p. 36.

by the divine law.... But these offenses against customary morality are to be avoided according to the variety of such customs. Thus, what is agreed upon by convention, and confirmed by custom or the law of any city or nation, may not be violated at the lawless pleasure of any, whether citizen or stranger.... Nevertheless, when god commands anything contrary to the customs or compacts of any nation, even though it were never done by them before, it is to be done; and if it has been interrupted, it is to be restored; and if it has never been established, it is to be established. For it is lawful for a king, in the state over which he reigns, to command that which neither he himself nor anyone before him had commanded. And if it cannot be held to be inimical to the public interest to obey him—and, in truth, it would be inimical if he were not obeyed, since obedience to princes is a general compact of human society—how much more, then, ought we unhesitatingly to obey god, the governor of all his creatures! For, just as among the authorities in human society, the greater authority is obeyed before the lesser, so also must god be above all.<sup>154</sup>

Calvin adopts this same “natural law” legal framework as set for in St. Augustine’s *Confessions*-- with God’s law as the supreme law of the secular or civil body politic-- for his ideal Christian polity.

Calvinists charted a course between the Erastianism of Lutherans (and Anglicans) that subordinated the church to the state, and the asceticism of early Anabaptists that withdrew the church from the state and society. Like Lutherans, Calvinists insisted that each local polity be an overtly Christian commonwealth that adhered to the general principles of natural law and that translated them into detailed new positive laws of religious worship, Sabbath observance, public morality, marriage and family, crime and tort, contract and business, charity and education. Like Anabaptists, Calvinists insisted on the basic separation of the offices and operations of church and state, leaving the church to govern its own doctrine and liturgy, polity and property, without interference from the state. But, unlike these other

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<sup>154</sup> St. Augustine, *Confessions* (New York, N.Y.: Barnes & Nobles Classics, 2007), p. 36.

Protestants, Calvinists stressed that both church and state officials were to play complementary roles in the creation of the local Christian commonwealth and in the cultivation of the Christian citizen.<sup>155</sup>

Perhaps this is one of few components of the Roman Catholic faith (e.g., the legal philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas) that Calvin thoroughly engrafted into his own theology and legal philosophy. St. Thomas' legal philosophy had organized a hierarchy of law (i.e., Eternal Law --→ Divine Law --→ Natural Law --→ Human Law) which Calvin never disputed and altogether appears to have embraced. In fact, Calvin expressly held, as do Roman Catholics now contend at this very hour, that the Ten Commandments represent a "universal law," a "natural law," and a "moral law" for all mankind and for all nations. According to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Second Edition):

### **I. The Natural Moral Law**

1954 Man participates in the wisdom and goodness of the Creator who gives him mastery over his acts and the ability to govern himself with a view to the true and the good. The natural law expresses the original moral sense which enables man to discern by reason the good and the evil, the truth and the lie:

The natural law is written and engraved in the soul of each and every man, because it is human reason ordaining him to do good and forbidding him to sin.... But this command of human reason would not have the force of law if it were not the voice and interpreter of a higher reason to which our spirit and our freedom must be submitted. [Leo XIII, *Libertas praestantissimum*, 597.]

1955 The 'divine and natural' law shows man the way to follow so as to practice the good and attain his end. The natural law states that first and essential precepts which govern the moral life. It hinges upon the desire for God and submission to him, who is the source and judge of all that is good, as well as upon the sense that the other is one's equal. **Its principal precepts are expressed in the**

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<sup>155</sup> John Witte, Jr. and Frank S. Alexander, *Christianity and Law: An Introduction* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2008), p. 23.

**Decalogue. This law is called ‘natural,’ not in reference to the nature of irrational beings, but because reason which decrees it properly belongs to human nature:**

Where then are these rules written, if not in the book of that light we call the truth? In it is written every just law; from it the law passes into the heart of the man who does justice, not that it migrates into it, but that it places its imprint on it, like a seal on a ring that passes onto wax, without leaving the ring. [St. Augustine, De Trin. 14, 15, 21: PL 42, 1052].

The natural law is nothing other than the light of understanding placed in us by God; through it we know what we must do and what we must avoid. God has given this light or law at the creation. [St. Thomas Aquinas, Dec. praec.I.].

1956 The natural law, present in the heart of each man and established by reason, is universal in its precepts and its authority extends to all men. It expresses the dignity of the person and determines the basis for his fundamental rights and duties:

For there is a true law: right reason. It is in conformity with nature, is diffused among all men, and is immutable and eternal; its orders summon the duty; its prohibitions turn away from offense.... To replace it with a contrary law is a sacrilege; failure to apply even one of its provisions is forbidden; no one can abrogate it entirely. [Cicero, Rep. III, 22, 33.]

1957 Application of the natural law varies greatly; it can demand reflection that takes account of various conditions of life according to places, times, and circumstances. Nevertheless, in the diversity of cultures, the natural law remains as a rule that binds men among themselves and imposes on them, beyond the inevitable differences, common principles.

1958 The natural law is immutable and permanent throughout the variations of history; it subsists under the flux of ideas and

customs and supports their progress. The rules that express it remain substantially valid. Even when it is rejected in its very principles, it cannot be destroyed or removed from the heart of man. It always rises again in the life of individuals and societies: ‘Theft is surely punished by your law, O Lord, and by the law that is written in the human heart, the law that iniquity itself does not efface. “[St. Augustine, Conf. 2, 4, 9: PL 32, 678.]’

1959 the natural law, the Creator’s very good work, provides the solid foundation on which man can build the structure of moral rules to guide his choices. It also provides the indispensable moral foundation for building the human community. Finally, it provides the necessary basis for the civil law with which it is connected, whether by a reflection that draws conclusions from its principles, or by additions of a positive and juridical nature.

Again, Calvin’s conceptualization of secular law was thoroughly rooted in the Roman Catholic tradition. Therefore, when Calvin divided the Law of Moses into three parts, that is to say, the moral law, the ceremonial law, and the judicial law, he did so with the express purpose of separating the moral law, which he identified as the Ten Commandments, from the remaining parts of the Mosaic Law. According to Calvin, the ceremonial law and the judicial law should be abrogated within the Christian Polity; but the Ten Commandments could not be abrogated because “the duties and precepts of charity can still remain perpetual.”<sup>156</sup> In general, Calvin also defined “natural law” as “equity,” and he used the two terms interchangeably, and identified them both with the Ten Commandments, as follows:

What I have said will become plain if we attend, as we ought, to two things connected with all laws, viz., the enactment of the law, and the equity on which the enactment is founded and rests. Equity, as it is natural, cannot but be the same in all, and therefore ought to be proposed by all laws, according to the nature of the thing enacted. As constitutions have some circumstances on which they partly

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<sup>156</sup> Ibid, p. 534.

depend, there is nothing to prevent their divers<sup>157</sup>ity, provided they all alike aim at equity as their end.

Now, as it is evident that the law of God which we call moral, is nothing else than the testimony of natural law, and of that conscience which God has engraven on the minds of men, the whole of this equity of which we now speak is prescribed in it. Hence it alone ought to be the aim, the rule, and the end of all laws. Wherever laws are formed after this rule, directed to this aim, and restricted to this end, there is no reason why they should be disapproved by us, however much they may differ from the Jewish law, or from each other, (Augst. De Civil. Dei, Lib. 19 c 17.)<sup>158</sup>

Calvin observed then if one conducted a comparative analysis of all of the laws in different nations, one would find a striking similarity in the objectives and goals of most of their laws. “[W]e see that amid this diversity,” Calvin wrote “they all tend to the same end. For they all with one mouth declare against those crimes which are condemned by the eternal law at God, viz., murder, theft, adultery, and false witness; though they agree not in the mode of punishment.” It thus safe to conclude, that Calvin believed that the Christian polity or commonwealth must be founded upon natural law.

However, Calvin wrote to achieve the goals of the Protestant Reformation and to remove the Church and the Christian polity from Roman Catholicism. Therefore, Calvin wrote to his fellow Protestants in large measure to distinguish his ideal Christian polity from the Holy Roman Empire and other areas where the Roman Catholic Church was established as the official state religion. Within the Roman Catholic scheme, at least in theory, the state was subordinate to the Roman Catholic Church. Since the days of Pope Gregory VII (i.e., Hildebrand) (circa 1015-1085, A.D.), the Pope had claimed supremacy over all principalities and kingdoms within Christendom. Calvin observed that once the Roman Catholic clergy began to dominate worldly and secular politics, the Gospel became corrupted and slowly, over a period of several centuries, the Roman Catholic Church had actually ceased to function as a true Church. Therefore, within Calvin’s ideal Christian polity, the Christian Clergy must not hold church office and official state office at the same time; and, further, the Church must be

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<sup>157</sup> Ibid, p. 535.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid, p. 535.



separated out from, and remain independent of, the State. And, vice versa, the State should remain separated out from, and remain independent of, the Church.

Importantly, within Calvin’s understanding of the doctrine of “Separation of Church and State,” both the Church and the State were to function as independent vice-regents of God; and they both shared the responsibility of administering equity, which is the natural law or the Law of God. In order to understand how Calvin derived this constitutional system, it is necessary to understand his Christian theology. Again, Calvin argued that the Ten Commandments reflected the “moral natural law” and that it also paralleled the Law of Nations. He believed that the Ten Commandments were thus considered to be timeless and universal among all nations. For this reason, Calvin’s Christian theology purported that the Ten Commandments prove that there is “a twofold government in man”<sup>159</sup>: spiritual (Church) and temporal (State). “[T]he one which, placed in the soul or inward man, relates to eternal life [and]... the other, which pertains only to civil institutions and the external regulation of manners.”<sup>160</sup> The temporal law is to be enacted, adjudicated, and executed by the secular civil magistrate. The spiritual law is to be interpreted and administered by the Church. However, Calvin made it quite clear that both the temporal law and the spiritual law came from the same source: God. Hence, Calvin developed within his Christian theology a theory of the “Two Tables,” meaning that the first portion of the Ten Commandments are the foundation of the spiritual law; and the second portion is the foundation of the temporal law. See, Table 3, “Two Tables Theory of the Ten Commandments.”

**Table 3. Calvin’s “Two Tables Theory of the Ten Commandments”**

<b>TEN COMMANDMENTS: First Table (The Church)</b>	<b>TEN COMMANDMENTS: Second Table (The Civil Magistrate)</b>
I am the Lord thy God! Thou shalt have no other Gods but me!	Thou shalt not kill!
Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain!	Thou shalt not commit adultery!
	Thou shalt not steal!

<sup>159</sup> Ibid, p. 528.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

Thou shalt keep the Sabbath Day holy!	Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor!
Thou shalt honor father and mother!	Do not let thyself lust after thy neighbor's wife!
	Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, nor his farm, nor his cattle, nor anything that is his!

Here, we clearly see that Calvin did not place the secular civil state outside of God's Providence. But, quite to the contrary, Calvin's secular civil state must cooperate with and protect the Church and generally function as the vice-regent of God.<sup>161</sup> Calvin wrote that "magistrates should be faithful as God's deputies," and that the "magistracy is ordained by God."<sup>162</sup> Within Calvin's Christian polity, the Church should not endeavor to run the secular government or hold the reigns of secular power. That secular power rightfully belongs to the civil magistrate. At the same time, the civil magistrate within a Christian polity must protect the Church. "For, seeing that Church has not, and ought not to wish to have," wrote Calvin, "the power of compulsion, (I speak of civil coercion,) it is the part of pious kings and princes to maintain religion by laws, edicts, and sentences."<sup>163</sup>

Furthermore, like St. Augustine, Calvin argued that Christians maintained a duty to get involved in the secular civil government in order to ensure that equity and justice would be served.<sup>164</sup> "What is this," wrote Calvin, "but that the business was committed to them by Gods to serve him in their office, and (as Moses and Jehoshaphat said to the judges whom they were appointing over each of the cities of Judah) to exercise judgment, not for man, but for God? To the same effect Wisdom affirms, by the mouth of Solomon, 'By me kings reigns and princes degree Justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth,' (Prov. 8:15, 16)."<sup>165</sup> He expressly argued against "the 'Christian' denial or

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<sup>161</sup> Ibid, p. 530.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid., p. 436.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid, p. 530.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid, pp. 529-530.

rejection of magistracy.”<sup>166</sup> Calvin did not allow his dislike of Roman Catholic corruption to affect his judgment as to the fundamental goodness of the civil magistrate. He argued that the objective of the civil magistrate is indispensable, stating:

But we shall have a fitter opportunity of speaking of the use of civil government. All we wish to be understood at present is, that it is perfect barbarism to think of exterminating it, its use among men being not less than that of bread and water, light and air, while its dignity is much more excellent. Its object is not merely, like those things, to enable men to breathe, eat, drink, and be warmed, (though it certainly includes all these, while it enables them to live together;) this, I say, is not its only object, but it is that no idolatry, no blasphemy against the name of God, no calumnies against his truth, nor other offences to religion, break out and be disseminated among the people; that the public quiet be not disturbed, that every man’s property be kept secure, that men may carry on innocent commerce with each other, that honesty and modesty be cultivated; in short, that a public form of religion may exist among Christians, and humanity among men.<sup>167</sup>

Furthermore, since the civil magistrate’s function is both fundamentally indispensable and ordained by God, Calvin, like Martin Luther, believed that even bad or ungodly civil magistrates should be obeyed. Calvin believed that true Christian obedience to the civil magistrate was to replicate Christ’s crucifixion on the cross; Christians must passively resist evil and be ready and willing to die for the truth. “But since Peter, one of heaven’s heralds, had published the edict, ‘We ought to obey God rather than men,’ (Acts 5: 29,)” Calvin admonished Christians to obey God first, while passively resisting the civil magistrate, on important questions of truth and conscience. Calvin made one exception: those Christians who held public office—whether as a member of the legislature, the bar, the bench, or other government office—which contains the express duty to hold the civil magistrate accountable, must carry out their lawful authority to resist an ungodly,

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<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid, p. 529.

evil civil magistrate.<sup>168</sup> Hence, members of Parliament should resist tyrannical monarchs, because, as Calvin wrote, such government officials are “constitutional defenders of the people’s freedom.”<sup>169</sup>

In addition, Calvin had much to say as to the operation of a court system within the Christian polity.<sup>170</sup> He addressed various concerns among Christians of his day that the Apostle Paul had forewarned Christians against taking their disputes to the civil magistrates of pagan Rome. Calvin may have rejected this reasoning in light of the different set of circumstances for which he was presenting his ideal Christian polity. For all of the reasons previously mentioned, Calvin gave Christians the express permission to utilize the secular civil courts in order to resolve disputes.<sup>171</sup> Calvin focused upon the “heart” of the civil litigants.<sup>172</sup> In other words, he disdained litigiousness; and he questioned the “motives” of Christians who resort to litigation.<sup>173</sup> According to Calvin, a Christian must not be “litigious” or engage in litigation through “hatred and revenge.”<sup>174</sup> Instead, the Christian must utilize the civil court system sparingly, and he or she can do so only with the limited objective of achieving justice and equity.<sup>175</sup> In sum, Calvin concluded this point by contending that “Paul condemns a litigious spirit, but not all litigation.”<sup>176</sup>

Finally, Calvin insisted that so long as “equity” is the beginning and end of the secular civil law and government, the actual form of the government, whether a monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy (i.e., “popular ascendancy”), was not very material or significant. “If you fix your eyes not on one state merely, but look around the world, or at least direct your view to regions widely separated from each other, you will perceive that divine Providence has not, without good cause, arranged that different countries should be governed by different forms of polity.”<sup>177</sup> Calvin observed forewarned that above-mentioned three forms of civil government had defects. But he favored a mixed form of civil government that had elements of “aristocracy” and elements of “democracy” as its key element. “When

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<sup>168</sup> Ibid, pp. 539-540.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid, pp. 535-536.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid, p. 531.

these three forms of government, of which philosophers treat,” Calvin wrote, “are considered in themselves, I, for my part, am far from denying that the form which greatly surpasses the others is aristocracy, either pure or modified by popular government, not indeed in itself, but because it vary rarely happens that kings so rule themselves as never to dissent from what is just and right, or are possessed of so much acuteness and prudence as always to see correctly. Owing therefore that vices or defects of men, it is safer and more tolerable when several bear rule, that they may thus mutually assist, instruct, and admonish each other, and should any one be disposed to go too far, the others are censors and masters to curb his excess. This has already been proved by experience, and confirmed also by the authority of the Lord himself, when he established an aristocracy bordering on popular government among the Israelites, keeping them under that as the best form, until he exhibited an image of the Messiah in David.”<sup>178</sup>

Thus, if Calvin was alive today, he would likely instruct us in the evolution of modern Western constitutional law and theory, as being an extraction out from the Old Testament’s description of the theocracy in ancient Palestine. Here, too, we find in the Protestant theologian John Calvin’s theory of Christian polity, more than two hundred years before the American Revolution of 1776, all of the fundamental and key ingredients from which the American constitutional doctrines of the “separation of powers,” the “separation of church and state,” “democratic republicanism,” and “fundamental right of conscience,” were extrapolated.

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<sup>178</sup> Ibid., p. 531.

## Appendix 1-B.

### THEOLOGY OF JOHN CALVIN:

#### *On Grace and Free Will*

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In John Calvin's theology, we find the powerful influence of St. Augustine's doctrine on sin, grace, and free will, as stated in *On Grace and Free Will*,<sup>179</sup> as well as Martin Luther's doctrine on the same principles in *On the Bondage of the Will*.<sup>180</sup> Indeed, as Bertrand Russell has observed, "Saint Augustine fixed the theology of the Church until the Reformation, and, later, a great part of the doctrines of Luther and Calvin."<sup>181</sup> We may thus rightfully conclude that Saint Augustine is the founding father of the Protestant Reformation.<sup>182</sup>

In *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book II, Chapter 5, Parts 2 and 4, Calvin takes up the arguments of St. Augustine against the Pelagians, while making his own analysis of grace and free will. And in Book II, Chapter 3, Part 13, he explicitly adopts verbatim St. Augustine's entire theology of grace and free will, stating:

Let us now hear Augustine in his own words, lest the Pelagians of our age, I mean the sophists of the Sorbonne, charge us after their wont with being opposed to all antiquity. In this, indeed, they imitate their father Pelagius, by whom of old a similar charge was brought against Augustine. In the second chapter of his Treatise De Correptione et Gratis, addressed to Valentinus, Augustine explains at length what I will state briefly, but in his own words, that to Adam was given the grace of persevering in goodness if he had the will; to us it is given to will, and by will overcome concupiscence; that Adam, therefore, had the power if he had the will, but did not will to have the power,

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<sup>179</sup> Saint Augustine, *On Grace and Free Will* (Louisville, Kentucky: GLH Publishing, 2017).

<sup>180</sup> Martin Luther, *The Bondage of the Will* (2011 Legacy Publications).

<sup>181</sup> Bertrand Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy* (New York, N.Y.: Touchstone, 2007), p. 335.

<sup>182</sup> "Saint Augustine was in the forefront of theological controversy during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Protestants and Jansenists being for him, and orthodox Catholics against him." Bertrand Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy* (New York, N.Y.: Touchstone, 2007), pp. 335, 364-366.



whereas to us is given both the will and the power; that the original freedom of man was to be able to not sin, but that we have a much greater freedom—viz. not to be able to sin....

Therefore, to meet the infirmity of the human will and to prevent it from failing, however weak it might be, divine grace was made to act on it inseparably and uninterruptedly.

Augustine next entering fully into the question, how our hearts follow the movement when God affects them, necessarily says, indeed, that the Lord draws men by their own wills; wills, however, which he himself has produced.... In another place, Augustine uses these words, ‘Every good work in us is performed only by grace.’<sup>183</sup>

Calvin claims that his doctrine on this subject had been “shut up in cloisters of monks for almost a thousand years,” and that his *Institutes of the Christian Religion* was re-publishing and re-stating the conventional, orthodox viewpoint on grace and free will:

Moreover, when I say that the will, deprived of liberty, is led or dragged by necessity to evil, it is strange that any should deem the expression harsh, seeing there is no absurdity in it, and it is not at variance with pious use. It does, however, offend those who know not how to distinguish between necessity and compulsion.... Therefore, if the free will of God in doing good is not impeded, because he necessarily must do good; if the devil, who can do nothing but evil, nevertheless sins voluntarily; can it be said that man sins less voluntarily because he is under a necessity of sinning?

This necessity is uniformly proclaimed by Augustine, who, even when pressed by the invidious cavil of Celestius, hesitated not to assert it in the following terms: ‘Man through liberty became a sinner, but corruption, ensuing as the penalty, has converted liberty into necessity.’... Man... cannot move or act except in the direction of

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<sup>183</sup> John Calvin, *God The Creator, God the Redeemer: Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Gainesville, FL.: Bridge-Logos, 2005), p. 266.

evil. If this is true, the think not obscurely expressed is, that he is under a necessity of sinning.

Bernard, assenting to Augustine, thus writes: ‘Among animals, man alone is free, and yet sin intervening, he suffers a kind of violence, but a violence proceeding from his will, not from nature, so that it does not even deprive him of innate liberty.... Thus, by some means strange and wicked, the will itself, being deteriorated by sin, makes a necessity.’... For this necessity is in a manner voluntary. [St. Bernard] afterwards says, ‘we are under a yoke, but no other yoke than that of voluntary servitude; therefore, in respect of servitude, we are miserable, and in respect of will, inexcusable; because the will, when it was free, made itself the slave of sin.’

At length [St. Bernard] concludes, ‘Thus the soul, in some strange and evil way, is held under this kind of voluntary, yet sadly free necessity, both bond and free; bond in respect of necessity, free in respect of will: and what is still more strange, and still more miserable, it is guilty because free, and enslaved because guilty, and therefore enslaved because free.’

My readers hence perceive that the doctrine, which I deliver, is not new, but the doctrine which of old Augustine delivered with the consent of all the godly, and which was afterwards shut up in the cloisters of monks for almost a thousand years.<sup>184</sup>

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As Augustine says, ‘What God promises, we ourselves do not through choice or nature, but he himself does by grace.’<sup>185</sup>

For Calvin, Christian humility is thus premised upon a true understanding of God’s grace: all goodness and all virtue belong to God, not human beings. It thus follows that any goodness or virtue that is within human beings is due to God’s grace, no human merit.<sup>186</sup> This lack of human merit defines Calvin’s very rigid

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<sup>184</sup> Ibid., pp. 256-257.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid., p. 286.

<sup>186</sup><sup>186</sup> Ibid., pp. 265-267.

idea of predestination. According to Calvin, the power of choice itself, that is, the ability to desire goodness and righteousness, is bestowed by God's grace. Calvin believed that God's prevenient grace is bestowed on every human being, but not everyone has the divine gift to accept this grace. "Men are indeed to be taught," wrote Calvin, "that the favor of God is offered, without exception, to all who ask it; but since those only begin to ask whom heaven be grace inspires, even this minute portion of praise must not be withheld from him. It is the privilege of the elect to be regenerated by the Spirit of God, and then placed under his guidance and government. Wherefore Augustine justly derides some who arrogate to themselves a certain power of willing, as well as censures others who imagine that that which is a special evidence of gratuitous election is given to all. He says, 'Nature is common to all, but not grace;' and he calls it a showy acuteness 'which shines by mere vanity, when that which God bestows, on whom he will is attributed generally to all.'"<sup>187</sup>

As we have discussed in Part 2 of this series, regarding the theology of Martin Luther, the practical effect of the doctrine of "free will" had a significant impact on Luther's idea of justification and salvation. Since the Christian was born in original sin, his will was defective and unable to function without sin; however, the redeeming power of Christ's crucifixion now gives him an option to live and to function without sin. Otherwise, the human will is in bondage to sin. Luther's doctrine certainly de-emphasized the Roman Catholic Church's administration the Seven Sacraments, particularly the Sacrament of Penance, because Luther believed that "works" would not merit salvation, only "justification through faith alone" could merit salvation. Luther determined that this "justification through faith alone" when the Christian faithful became "born-again" in the Holy Spirit through God's grace. At the same time, Luther unchained God and Christ from grip of the Roman Catholic Church, and placed them within the reach of everyone who then stood outside of "clerical order of the Church" (i.e., deacons, priests, bishops, etc. Luther promulgated the doctrine of the "priesthood of all believers"—if only the common believer turned to God's saving grace for assistance.

John Calvin was able to expand Luther's work and ideas into more detailed, encyclopedic volumes, which he titled, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. This

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<sup>187</sup> Ibid., p. 263.

four-book set was written over Calvin's entire adulthood, having gone through several publications and translations. Calvin was able to make additions, corrections, and changes to this work throughout his entire career as a pastor and theologian. He included his own original doctrines and ideas; he incorporated most of Luther's doctrines; and, most significantly, he relied primarily upon the Bible and the writings of St. Augustine in order to vindicate the vast majority of his theological opinions and polemics against various teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. Like both St. Augustine and Martin Luther, Calvin also warned against "a false opinion of liberty" which was advanced by the Pelagians of St. Augustine's day, Aristotle, the humanists, and other philosophers, that human beings retained "free will" to do good or to do evil; and that they could do good through their own, independent volition, *either with or without the aid of God*. "For they," wrote Calvin, "when exhorting man to know himself, state the motive to be, that he may not be ignorant of his own excellence and dignity. They wish him to see nothing in himself but what will fill him with vain confidence, and inflate him with pride."<sup>188</sup>

Calvin inveighed against this notion that human beings were inherently excellent or that they could do good *without the aid of God*. Such a notion was for Calvin dangerous and misleading; for without the aid of God, human beings are completely doomed to utter disaster. To fully understand Calvin's position, it is necessary to understand his idea of "original sin." Calvin proved the doctrine "original sin" by simply asking each of us to honestly search our own souls and realize our utter powerlessness to live sinless, perfect lives. Calvin argued that human beings are "diseased" and that "Satan, by thus craftily hiding the disease, tried to render it incurable."<sup>189</sup> Calvin wrote that "[o]riginal sin, then, may be defined a *hereditary corruption* and *depravity of our nature*, extending to all the parts of the soul, which first makes us obnoxious to the wrath of God...."<sup>190</sup> Thus, according Calvin, original sin is a turn-away from God, through pride. God is not the author of this sin, but through the perversity of pride mankind choose to know "evil" as well as "good," and thereby sin entered into the world. Through this disease of "Original Sin," mankind lost its freedom of will.<sup>191</sup> As such, it is in bondage to sin. "Thus, in short, all philosophers maintain, that human reason is

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<sup>188</sup> Ibid., pp. 206-207.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid., p. 211.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid., p. 214.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid., p. 219.

sufficient for right government; that the will, which is inferior to it, may indeed be solicited to evil by sense, but having a free choice, there is nothing to prevent it from following reason as its guide in all things.”<sup>192</sup>

The best course of action is thus to forewarn human beings of the dangers of “original sin” and of the inherent evil that is within them and to admonish them to seek God’s saving grace. Calvin wrote:

But self-knowledge consists in this, first, When reflecting on what God gave us at our creation, and still continues graciously to give, we perceive how great the excellence of our nature would have been had its integrity remained, and, at the same time, remember that we have nothing of our own, but depend entirely on God, from whom we hold at pleasure whatever he has seen it meet to bestow; secondly, When viewing our miserable condition since Adam’s fall, all confidence and boasting are overthrown, we blush for shame, and feel truly humble. For as God at first formed us in his own image, that he might elevate our minds to the pursuit of virtue, and the contemplation of eternal life, so to prevent us from heartlessly burying those noble qualities which distinguish us from the lower animals, it is of importance to know that we were endued with reason and intelligence, in order that we might cultivate a holy and honorable life, and regard a blessed immortality as our destined aim. At the same time, it is impossible to think of our primeval dignity without being immediately reminded of the sad spectacle of our ignominy and corruption.<sup>193</sup>

This description and analysis of the human condition was to Calvin the most important component of Christian theology. The whole human race had become morally degenerate through the Fall of Adam and Eve, and the only redemptive power that can remove this degenerate state is the redemptive power of Christ’s crucifixion. See, Table 4, “Christian View of the Human Condition.”

**Table 4. Christian View of the Human Condition**

Human Beings -----→	GOOD Qualities (Nature)
Human Beings -----→	EVIL Qualities (Sin; Corruption of Nature)

<sup>192</sup> Ibid., p. 224.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid., p. 207.

Calvin was concerned that the pagan philosophers and other non-Christians had overemphasized the good qualities within human beings, and that they put undue emphasis on human beings' inherent abilities to achieve virtue, truth, wisdom and justice, without divine grace.

First, Calvin argued that if human beings honestly examine themselves and others, they must reach the conclusion that, even though human beings have the power to conceptualize virtue and goodness, they nevertheless lack the willpower to live virtuously and righteously.<sup>194</sup>

"The question is," says Calvin, "Does man, after determining by right reason what is good, choose what he thus knows, and pursue what he thus chooses?"<sup>195</sup> Calvin concludes that man's natural inclination to do good is nothing more than the animal instinct of self-preservation and self-interest. "[I]f you attend to what this natural desire of good in man is, you will find that is common to him with the brutes," Calvin wrote.<sup>196</sup> "For this *appetite* is not properly a movement of the will but natural inclination; and this good is not one of virtue or righteousness, but of condition—viz. that the individual may feel comfortable. In fine, no matter how much man may desire to obtain what is good, he does not follow it."<sup>197</sup> Calvin contended that we human beings need only honestly examine ourselves to reach this self-evident conclusion.

Second, Calvin argued that the Sacred Scriptures affirmed the human condition as thoroughly vitiated with sin. Regarding "human nature," Calvin concludes that "there is no part in which it is not perverted and corrupted."<sup>198</sup> The human being is governed by the flesh, or fleshly desires; and, for this reason, needs

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<sup>194</sup> Calvin writes: "The Apostle, when he would humble man's pride, uses these words: 'There is none righteous no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that does good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulcher; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways: and the way of peace have they not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes' (Romans 3:10-18). Thus, he thunders not against certain individuals, but against the whole posterity of Adam—not against the depraved manners of any single age, but the perpetual corruption of nature.... If these are the hereditary properties of the human race, it is vain to look for anything good in our nature." Ibid., pp. 252-253.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid., p. 246.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid., p. 246.

<sup>197</sup> Ibid.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid., p. 252.



to be restrained by law. St. Paul described this phenomenon in Romans 7:5-25, as follows:

<sup>5</sup> For **when we were in the flesh**, the **motions of sins**, which were by the law, **did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death**.

<sup>6</sup> But now we are **delivered from the law**, that being dead wherein we were held; that **we should serve in newness of spirit**, and not in the oldness of the letter.

<sup>7</sup> What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: **for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet**.

<sup>8</sup> But **sin**, taking occasion by the commandment, **wrought in me all manner of concupiscence**. For without the law sin was dead.

<sup>9</sup> For I was alive without the law once: but **when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died**.

<sup>10</sup> And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death.

<sup>11</sup> For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me.

<sup>12</sup> Wherefore the **law is holy**, and the **commandment holy**, and **just**, and **good**.

<sup>13</sup> Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But **sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good**; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.

<sup>14</sup> For we know that the law is spiritual: but **I am carnal, sold under sin**.

<sup>15</sup> **For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I**.

<sup>16</sup> If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.

<sup>17</sup> Now then **it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me**.

<sup>18</sup> For I know that **in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing**: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

<sup>19</sup> For **the good that I would I do not**: but **the evil which I would not, that I do**.

<sup>20</sup> Now **if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me**.

<sup>21</sup> I find then a law, that, **when I would do good, evil is present with me.**

<sup>22</sup> **For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:**

<sup>23</sup> But I see **another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.**

<sup>24</sup> **O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?**

<sup>25</sup> **I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.** So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

Calvin's view was that through self-reflection and awareness, we must all reach the inevitable conclusion that our evil qualities abound and prevent us from attaining virtue, truth, wisdom, justice, and the like, without divine grace. "What answer," Calvin asked "shall we give to the Lord, who declares, by Moses, 'every imagination of man's heart is only evil continually?'"<sup>199</sup> "Let us therefore rather adopt the sentiment of Augustine... 'Of our own we have nothing but sin.'"<sup>200</sup> Having thus concluded that the entire human race is completely and thoroughly vitiated with Original Sin,<sup>201</sup> Calvin refutes the philosophers and others who hold that human virtues are adequate, without the grace of God (i.e., Christ). In fact, Calvin explicitly refutes them with the contention that the entire human race needs to be "born again."<sup>202</sup> Calvin thus quotes Ezekiel 36:26, 27, stating: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them."<sup>203</sup> See, e.g., Table 5. "Redemptive Power of God's Grace"

**Table 5. Redemptive Power of God's Grace**

<b>Christian View on Human Evil</b>	Human Beings' evil qualities can only be overcome through the redemptive
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<sup>199</sup> Ibid., p. 247.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid., p. 248.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid., pp. 251-259.

<sup>202</sup> Ibid., p. 251 (Calvin writes: "The statement of our Lord is that a man must be **born again**, because he is flesh. He requires not to be **born again**, with reference to the body. But a mind is not born again merely by having some portion of it reformed. It must be totally renewed. This is confirmed by the antithesis used in both passages.")

<sup>203</sup> Ibid., pp. 257-258.

	power of <i>God's grace</i> : Human beings need the redemptive power of Christ's crucifixion and must be truly "born again."
<b>Pagan, Secular, or Non-Christian View on Human Evil</b>	Human Beings' evil qualities can be addressed through <i>human merit</i> : education, cultivation, moral hygiene, and the pursuit of excellence and moral virtue.

It is not altogether clear that these two viewpoints are mutually-exclusive. In fact, the Roman Catholic Church has certainly merged both viewpoints into its prescription for Christian salvation. See, e.g., the Catechism of the Catholic Church, "Merit",<sup>204</sup>; "Cardinal Virtues",<sup>205</sup> "Prudence",<sup>206</sup> "Justice",<sup>207</sup> "Fortitude",<sup>208</sup> and "Temperance",<sup>209</sup>; "Theological Virtues",<sup>210</sup> "Faith",<sup>211</sup> "Hope",<sup>212</sup> and "Charity".<sup>213</sup> See, e.g., Table C, Roman Catholic Church on "Grace, Justification, and Merit." Calvin thus writes: "[i]f any, even the minutest, ability were in ourselves, there would also be some merit. But to show our utter destitution, he argues that we merit nothing, because we are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has prepared; again intimating by these words, that all the fruits of good works are originally and immediately from God.... [The Psalmist, in Psalms 100:3] distinctly excludes us from all share in [our salvation], just as if he had said that not one particle remains to man as a ground of boasting. The whole is of God."<sup>214</sup>

<sup>204</sup> *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, (New York, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1995), p. 541.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 495-496,

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>208</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>209</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 498-503.

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>214</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 258-259.

**Table 6. Roman Catholic Church on “Grace, Justification, and Merit”<sup>215</sup>**

<p><b>I. Grace</b> <b>II. Justification</b></p> <p><i>Protestants’ Agree on “Grace and Justification”</i></p>	<p>Human beings’ evil qualities can be overcome through the redemptive power of <i>God’s grace</i>: Human beings need the redemptive power of Christ’s crucifixion and must be truly “born again.”</p>
<p><b>III. Merit</b></p> <p><i>Most Protestants Christians disagree with the doctrine of “Merit”</i></p>	<p>Next, upon receiving God’s grace, human beings’ evil qualities can be absolved or alleviated through <i>human merit</i>: four cardinal virtues; three theological virtues; plus, education, cultivation, moral hygiene, and the pursuit of excellence and moral virtue.</p>

In fact, the modern edition of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* now embraces a doctrine of “Grace and Justification” that closely resembles the theologies of St. Augustine in *On Grace and Free Will* and of Martin Luther in *On the Bondage of the Will*. But the *Catechism* also adds the doctrine of “III. Merit” to the doctrines of “I. Justification” and “II. Grace.” The Catholic idea of “merit” needs additional explanation that is beyond the scope of this essay, but suffice it say, this doctrine is what primarily separates the Roman Catholic Church from most Protestant churches.

Returning to *On the Bondage of the Will*, Martin Luther asserts, “for all that is sought for in the defence [sic] of ‘Free-will,’ is to make place for merit. This is manifest: for the Diatribe has, throughout, argued and expostulated thus, --‘If there be no freedom of will, how can there be place for merit? And if there be no place for merit, how can there be place for reward? To whom will the reward be assigned, if justification be without merit?’” Paul here gives you an answer.—That there is no such thing as merit at all; but that all who are justified are justified ‘freely;’ that this is ascribed to no one but the grace of God....”<sup>216</sup> This was Calvin’s theological position as well.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid.

<sup>216</sup> Martin Luther, *On the Bondage of the Will*, (Legacy Publications, 2011), p. 103.

In the Roman Catholic Church, this idea of “Merit” opened the door for the sort of abuses of the Sacrament of Penance and the sale of indulgences which gave rise to Martin Luther’s criticisms and the posting of his *Ninety-Five Theses* in October 31, 1517. This idea of “Merit” essentially denotes Christian holiness, as the Roman Catholic Church purports. Protestants such as Luther and Calvin would vehemently object to the Catholic Church’s definition and prescriptions regarding “holiness.” For both Luther and Calvin, it was apparent that the Romanist had allowed too much pagan and worldly philosophy to creep into and to destroy the Christian faith. The Romanists had left Christians with the impression that through “meritorious deeds,” as prescribed by priests during confession, the Christian faithful could achieve salvation. Luther and Calvin, however, wanted to drive home the important point that no human merits could achieve salvation, and, therefore, the Roman Catholic Church’s theology on “merits” was not only misleading, but was also antichrist. Of course, Luther and Calvin both taught that Christian holiness resulted in meritorious deeds and conduct, but that “human merits,” *without the help of divine grace*, cannot attain or achieve salvation or justification. Luther, Calvin and the early Protestants extended the necessity of divine grace for any and all goodness that could be achieved through human conduct, since they put no limitations on God’s Providence.

Calvin also argued that Christ himself is the substance of God’s grace. Christ’s sinless life on earth, followed by his crucifixion and resurrection from the dead, was sufficient to merit our salvation; for “Christ, by his obedience, truly purchased and merited grace for us with the Father.”<sup>217</sup> The merits of human beings thus obscures the meaning and provision of God’s grace; indeed, human merit is wholly insufficient to achieve God’s grace.<sup>218</sup> For due only to Gods’ “good pleasure he appointed a Mediator to purchase salvation for us.”<sup>219</sup> Echoing Martin Luther, Calvin thus writes: “[f]or if we obtain justification by a faith which leans on him, the groundwork of our salvation must sought in him.”<sup>220</sup>

The early Protestants wanted to ensure that the dignity and authority of Jesus Christ was preserved in the Church so that they would not be obscured in the

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<sup>217</sup> John Calvin, *God The Creator, God the Redeemer: Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Gainesville, FL.: Bridge-Logos, 2005), pp. 487-493.

<sup>218</sup> Ibid.

<sup>219</sup> Ibid.

<sup>220</sup> Ibid., p. 489.

minds of Christians. Calvin himself stressed humbleness and humility, and so the Catholic doctrine of works and merits were unintelligible—the Sacrament of Penance was therefore untenable. For when Christians truly examine themselves, they should feel a sense of shame, remorse, and lose complete confidence in their own powers without divine grace and assistance. It is important to stress that self-reliance, without God, is dangerous. Humanism, without God, is dangerous. A misunderstanding of free will and the human inability to avoid Original Sin, is dangerous. Calvin felt that:

[T]his heralding of human excellence what it may, by teaching man to rest in himself, it does nothing more than fascinate by its sweetness, and, at the same time, so delude as to drown in perdition all who assent to it. For what avails it to proceed in vain confidence, to deliberate, resolve, plan, and attempt what we deem pertinent to the purpose, and, at the very outset, prove deficient and destitute both of sound intelligence and true virtue, though we still confidently persist until we rush headlong on destruction? But this is the best that can happen to those who put confidence in their own powers. Whosoever, therefore, gives heed to those teachers, who merely employ us in contemplating our good qualities, so far from making progress in self-knowledge, will be plunged into the most pernicious ignorance.<sup>221</sup>

A fundamental postulate of Calvin's theology was that the whole human race is fatally diseased. When Adam disobeyed God's command to eat only from the Tree of Life, but ate from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, he committed a serious infidelity against God, which caused a fatal disease of the body and soul. This fatal disease is sin; and it is transmissible from one generation to the next, from Adam to all of his posterity. "Hence, infidelity was at the root of the revolt," Calvin writes. "From infidelity again sprang ambition and pride, together with ingratitude...."<sup>222</sup> "Augustine, indeed," Calvin observes, "is not far from the mark, when he says (Psalm 19), that pride was the beginning of all evil, because, had not man's ambition carried him higher than he was permitted, he

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<sup>221</sup> John Calvin, *God The Creator, God the Redeemer: Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Gainesville, FL.: Bridge-Logos, 2005), p. 208.

<sup>222</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 210.



might have continued in his first estate.”<sup>223</sup> Calvin thought it necessary to stress the significance of Adam’s “Original Sin”; for this was more than an act of rebellion, of a sensual, pleasure-seeking fulfillment; but rather when Adam sinned, he was so perfect and upright that his “Original Sin” was in essence a knowing, voluntary, and prideful turning against God. This “Original Sin” created an incurable disease<sup>224</sup> within the human race. The whole of secular, ecclesiastical, and political history as we know it is derived from this fundamental fact—the human race is incurably diseased!<sup>225</sup> Calvin thus describes this disease:

I have said, therefore, that all the parts of the soul were possessed by sin, ever since Adam revolted from the fountain of righteousness. For not only did the inferior appetites entice him, but abominable impiety seized upon the very citadel of the mind, and pride penetrated to this inmost heart (Romans 7:12; Book 4, chapter 15, section 10-12), so that it is foolish and unmeaning to confine the corruption thence proceeding to what are called sensual motions, or to call it an excitement, which allures, excites, and drags the single part which they call sensuality into sin.<sup>226</sup>

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Let it stand, therefore, as an individual truth, which no engines can shake, that the mind of man is so entirely alienated from the righteousness of God that he cannot conceive, desire, or design anything but what is wicked, distorted, foul, impure, and iniquitous; that his heart is so thoroughly envenomed by sin that it can breathe out nothing but corruption and rottenness; that if some men occasionally make a show of goodness, their mind is ever interwoven with hypocrisy and deceit, their soul inwardly bound with the fetters of wickedness.<sup>227</sup>

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<sup>223</sup> Ibid., p. 209.

<sup>224</sup> According to Christian orthodoxy, the disease is “incurable” without God’s divine grace (i.e., Christ).

<sup>225</sup> Ibid.

<sup>226</sup> John Calvin, *God The Creator, God the Redeemer: Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Gainesville, FL.: Bridge-Logos, 2005), p. 215.

<sup>227</sup> Ibid., p. 299.

Like Luther's thesis, *On the Bondage of the Will*, Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion* leaves no room for human goodness or "right reason unaffected by desire" that is outside of God's grace (i.e., the redemptive power of Christ). Calvin concludes that the "Word of God leaves no half-life to man, but teaches, that, in regard to life and happiness, he has utterly perished."<sup>228</sup>

Moreover, as Calvin says, another fundamental fact of human history is that "Satan, by thus craftily hiding the disease, tried to render it incurable."<sup>229</sup> Here, we find the essence of social acceptance of sin; or the turning away from holiness; or the obscuring of the Gospel of Christ; or the work of antichrist, throughout the entire world. The goal of Satan is to prevent the human race of having a self-awareness of its disease of Original Sin, so that it will refrain from seeking a cure for this disease.

Another important point in Calvin's theology, which we also find in St. Augustine's *The City of God*, is that human nature is perfect and good, but through Adam's Original Sin, this human nature became defective. Calvin thus concludes that "let us remember that our ruin is attributable to our own depravity, that we may not insinuate a charge against God himself, the Author of nature. It is true that nature has received a mortal wound, but there is a great difference between a wound inflicted from without, and one inherent in our first condition. It is plain that this wound was inflicted by sin...."<sup>230</sup> Human nature as we know it is therefore a voluntary wound inflicted by humankind upon itself, through Adam. The disease of sin came about as a self-inflicted wound. The *partial* cure of this disease, therefore, is divine law and natural law; the complete cure is God's *grace* and *justification*. In fact, under the Christian doctrine, all law, including secular or civil laws, reflect the medicinal cure for human sin. This sequence is as follows:

#### **Table 7. The Christian Origins of Western Law and Jurisprudence**

[1]. **God** (the creator of Perfect and Upright Human nature; voluntary willfulness)-  
 ---→[2] **Upright Human Nature** (Natural Law; voluntary willfulness)----→[3]  
**Original Sin** (Adam's sin)-----→[4] **Defective Human Nature** (inherited through

<sup>228</sup> Ibid., p. 298.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid., p. 211.

<sup>230</sup> Ibid., p. 216.

Adam's sin; involuntary willfulness to commit sin; bondage to sin)-----→[5] **Law and Jurisprudence** (remedy to cure sin; including eternal law, divine law, natural law, and human law).

For this reason, as Table 7 reveals, the human will is presented with a choice between Good and Evil; but at the same time, the human will is involuntarily bound to sin—promiscuity, licentiousness, pride, envy, covetousness, theft, murder, etc. To be sure, the human race has a very *vague memory* of the “Garden of Eden” and of the perfection of its first parents Adam and Eve; for the human race certainly knows and can conceptualize the Good (i.e., God, happiness, perfection, the Platonic ideal). But, having eaten of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, the entire human race is infected with the disease of Original Sin and is also in bondage to evil. According to Calvin, the “intellect and will of the whole man [is] corrupt.”<sup>231</sup> Since Original sin entered the world, the human heart is ‘involved in corruption, and hence in no part of man can integrity, or knowledge or the fear of God, be found.’<sup>232</sup> As Calvin sums up the predicament of the human condition:

Let it stand, therefore, as an indubitable truth, which no engines can shake, that the mind of man is so entirely alienated from the righteousness of God that he cannot conceive, desire, or design anything but what is wicked, distorted, foul, impure, and iniquitous; that his heart is so thoroughly envenomed by sin that it can breathe out nothing but corruption and rottenness; that if *some men occasionally make a show of goodness, their mind is ever interwoven with hypocrisy and deceit, their soul inwardly bound with the fetters of wickedness.*<sup>233</sup>

Like Martin Luther who argued against the idea of “free will, apart from grace,” in his seminal work *On The Bondage of the Will*, Calvin reached a similar conclusion, stating that the “Word of God leaves no half-life to man, but teaches, that, in regard to life and happiness, he has utterly perished.”<sup>234</sup> For Calvin, due to “the corruption of nature... man has become the slave of sin, and can will nothing

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<sup>231</sup> Ibid., p. 251.

<sup>232</sup> Ibid., p. 252.

<sup>233</sup> Ibid., p. 299.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid., p. 298.

but evil.”<sup>235</sup> “I deny the inference,” writes Calvin, “that sin may be avoided because it is voluntary.”<sup>236</sup>

Given this dire predicament, what to do? The answer lies primarily in the very nature of human freedom. For Calvin, the argument that human beings have “free will” that is somehow beyond God’s foreknowledge and omniscience was preposterous. Calvin turns to the Old Testament, where God repeatedly chastises the Children of Israel for being disobedient. Throughout these scenarios, God allows them to be afflicted (i.e., he withdraws his hedge of protection), “and makes trial of what we will do in his absence.”<sup>237</sup> Of course, when God does these things, he affords opportunities for the disobedient to repent. For, indeed, as stated in 1 Chronicles 7:14: “If my people, which are called by my name, *shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways*; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” Hence, Calvin observes that “from this it is erroneously inferred, that there is some power of free will, the extent of which is to be considered and tried, whereas the only end which he has in view is to bring us to an acknowledgement of our utter nothingness.”<sup>238</sup> In other words, Calvin does not admit that such biblical passages as 2 Chronicles 7:14, proves that there is free will, but only that God humbles the disobedient. Indeed, the human will is “not so free as to be exempt from the overruling providence of God.”<sup>239</sup> “[W]henver God is pleased to make way for his providence, he even in external matters so turns and bends the wills of men, that whatever the freedom of their choice may be, it is still subject to the disposal of God.”<sup>240</sup> And Calvin, quoting St. Augustine, writes: “‘Scripture, if it be carefully examined, will show not only that the good wills of men are made good by God out of evil, and when so made, are directed to good acts, even to eternal life, but those which retain the elements of the world are in the power of God, to turn them whither he pleases, and when he pleases, either to perform acts of kindness, or by a hidden, indeed, but, at the same time, most just judgment to inflict punishment.’”<sup>241</sup> Thus, Calvin’s stern warning to philosophers, secularists, and

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<sup>235</sup> Ibid., p. 279.

<sup>236</sup> Ibid., p. 279.

<sup>237</sup> Ibid., p. 293.

<sup>238</sup> Ibid., p. 293.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid., p. 269.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid., p. 275.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid., p. 275.

other Christians is that they should not give human beings “a false opinion of liberty.”<sup>242</sup> But what is needed, at least according to Calvin, is for human beings and human societies to receive a fair, accurate, and correct understanding of the human condition.

Importantly, Calvin argued that human virtue and worldly success and accolades are not equivalent to the Grace of God (i.e., becoming truly “born-again” in the Holy Spirit).

In every age there have been some who, under the guidance of nature, were all their lives devoted to virtue. It is of no consequence, that many blots may be detected in their conduct; by the mere study of virtue, they evinced that there was somewhat of purity in their nature. The value that virtues of this kind have in the sight of God will be considered more fully when we treat of the merit of works.... Hence, no matter how much men may disguise their impurity, some are restrained only by shame, others by a fear of the laws, from breaking out into many kinds of wickedness. Some aspire to an honest life, as deeming it most conducive to their interest, while others are raised above the vulgar lot, that, by the dignity of their station, they may keep inferiors to their duty. Thus God, by his providence, curbs the perverseness of nature, preventing it from breaking forth into action, yet without rendering it inwardly pure.<sup>243</sup>

Calvin inevitably concludes what mankind most needs “is a physician, not a defender”; that is to say, the Church must operate as a hospital, not as a courtroom. (Nearly a century later, Baptist theologian Roger Williams would reach the same conclusion: to wit, that the Church must operate as a college or corporation of physicians within the larger secular society. The human race is thus in need of spiritual repair and healing.) The disease of sin has resulted from disobedience to God’s laws; this disease is incurable without perfect obedience to God’s laws. Calvin thus observes: “when God enjoins meekness, submission, love, chastity, idolatry, and the like, he either mocks us, or only requires things which are in our power.”<sup>244</sup> Human beings, of course, are incapable of reaching or achieving this perfect obedience to God’s laws, with one exception: God’s grace. For this reason,

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<sup>242</sup> Ibid., p. 279.

<sup>243</sup> Ibid., pp. 253-254.

<sup>244</sup> Ibid., p. 284.

Calvin quotes St. Augustine, who said: “‘God orders what we cannot do, that we may know what we ought to ask of him. There is a great utility in precepts, if all that is given to free will is to do greater honor to divine grace. Faith acquires what the Law requires; nay, the Law requires, in order that faith may acquire what is thus required; nay, more, God demands of us faith itself, and finds not what he thus demands, until by giving he makes it possible to find It’.... ‘Let God give what he orders, and order what he wills.’”<sup>245</sup> The grace of God is the regeneration of the Holy Spirit inside of human beings when they become “born again,” when, as St. Augustine says, “the will is not destroyed, but rather repaired, by grace.”<sup>246</sup> The human will is voluntary; Calvin says that “we have naturally an innate power of willing.” Therefore, the human will is capable of willing that which is good; and, yet, at the same time, it is incapable of doing that which is good, without God’s grace. When the human will voluntarily desires or turns toward that which is good, “*we are not improperly said to do the things of which God claims for himself all the praise*; first, because *everything which his kindness produces in us* is our own... [but] is not of ourselves....”<sup>247</sup> Calvin writes: “the grace that he bestows upon us, inasmuch as he makes it our own, he recompenses as if the virtuous acts were our own.”<sup>248</sup>

For Calvin, there is an element of “predestination” in all of this; for faith is itself a “gift of God,” and the man who has the disposition to receive this free gift from God should “not boast” that he “is the author of that disposition.”<sup>249</sup> Thus quoting Romans 8:30, Calvin writes: “ ‘Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.’”<sup>250</sup> And, “He had proved the condition of the reprobate by the example of Pharaoh, and confirmed the certainty of *gratuitous election* by the passage in Moses, ‘I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy.’”<sup>251</sup> For this reason, “there is no good will in man until it is prepared by the Lord; not that we ought not to will and run, but that both are produced in us by God.”<sup>252</sup> And “while

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<sup>245</sup> Ibid., pp. 285-286.

<sup>246</sup> Ibid., p. 295.

<sup>247</sup> Ibid., p. 295.

<sup>248</sup> Ibid., p. 281.

<sup>249</sup> Ibid., p. 290.

<sup>250</sup> Ibid., p. 281.

<sup>251</sup> Ibid., p. 296.

<sup>252</sup> Ibid., p. 297.



we all labor naturally under the same disease, those only recover health to whom the Lord is pleased to put forth his healing hand. The others, whom he passes over in just judgment, pine and rot away until they are consumed.”<sup>253</sup> And “the Lord, by his mighty power, strengthens and sustains the former, so that they perish not, while he does not furnish the same assistance to the latter, but leaves them to be monuments of instability.”<sup>254</sup>

What does this actually mean? It means that, without the Holy Spirit, the human will remains deformed and defected by Original Sin. But the Holy Spirit heals this deformed, defective human will. Calvin states “the Lord both corrects, or rather destroys, our depraved will, and also substitutes a good will from himself.”<sup>255</sup> This is the “born-again” process that takes place inside of the human soul, “[b]y his Spirit illuminating their minds, and training their hearts to the practice of righteousness, he makes them new creatures....”<sup>256</sup> As Calvin correctly observes:

When God erects his kingdom in them, he, by means of his Spirit, curbs their will, that it may not follow its natural bent, and be carried hither and thither by vagrant lusts; bends, frames, trains, and guides it according to the rule of his justice, so as to incline it to righteousness and holiness, and establishes and strengthens it by the energy of his Spirit, that it may not stumble or fall. For which reason Augustin thus expresses himself, ‘It will be said we are therefore acted upon by one that is good. The Spirit of God who actuates you is your helper in acting, and bears the name of helper, because you, too, do something.’ In the former member of this sentence, he reminds us that the motion of the Holy Spirit does not destroy the agency of man, because nature furnishes the will, which is guided to aspire to good. As to the second member of the sentence, in which he says that the very idea of help implies that we also do something, we must not understand it as if he were attributing to us some independent power of action; but not to foster a feeling of sloth, he reconciles the agency of God with our own agency, by saying, that *to wish is from nature, to wish well is from grace....* Hence,

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<sup>253</sup> Ibid., p. 281.

<sup>254</sup> Ibid., p. 281.

<sup>255</sup> Ibid., p. 259.

<sup>256</sup> Ibid., p. 283.

it appears that the grace of God (as this name is used when regeneration is spoke of) is the rule of the Spirit, in directing and governing the human will.<sup>257</sup>

More specifically, Calvin concludes that “faith” must actually be “faith in Christ, the Redeemer,”<sup>258</sup> as foretold in the Sacred Scriptures, including the books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Micha, Zechariah, and other prophecies.<sup>259</sup> Original Sin has separated humankind from communion and fellowship with God; only Jesus Christ, as Mediator, can rejoin this broken relationship, through faith, in baptism, and in the holy communion, whereby we eat his flesh (bread) and drink his blood (wine)—i.e., human beings to have faith in Christ, become sons of God. Indeed, Calvin explicitly observes this rule of faith, where he writes:

Hence, also Paul affirms that all the Gentiles were ‘without God,’ and deprived of the hope of life. Now, since John teaches that there was life in Christ from the beginning, and that the whole world had lost it (John 1:4), it is necessary to return to that fountain. And, accordingly, Christ declares that inasmuch as he is a propitiator, he is life. And, indeed, the inheritance of heaven belongs to none but the sons of God (John 15:6). Now, it was most incongruous to give the place and rank of sons to any who have not been engrafted into the body of the only begotten Son. And John distinctly testifies that those who believe in his name become the sons of God.<sup>260</sup>

Calvin insists that Christ is necessary to serve and honor God the Father. “John is correct: ‘Whoever denieth the Son, the same has not the Father,’” Calvin writes. “Christ tells his disciples... ‘Ye believe in God, believe also in me.’”<sup>261</sup>

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<sup>257</sup> Ibid., p. 294.

<sup>258</sup> Ibid., p. 302.

<sup>259</sup> Ibid., pp. 304-306.

<sup>260</sup> Ibid., p. 303.

<sup>261</sup> Ibid., pp. 307-308.

## Appendix 1-C.

### THEOLOGY OF JOHN CALVIN:

#### *On the Essence of God*

Calvin believed that there was four ways to know the essence of God. First, we must study nature (i.e., God’s creations); secondly, we must study ourselves (i.e., human nature); thirdly, we may observe God’s divine providence in human affairs (e.g., politics, history); and, fourthly, we must study the Bible.

In addition, Calvin believed that in order to practice the *true religion*, we must first know God. For Calvin, we must “observe that true religion must be conformable to the *will of God* as its unerring standard.” See, e.g., Table 4, “The Standard of True Religion: the Will of God.”

**Table 4. The Standard of True Religion: the Will of God**

<b>Religious Beliefs -----→</b>	<b>Will of God</b>
<b>Religious Custom/ Practice-----→</b>	<b>Will of God</b>
<b>Religious Rites-----→</b>	<b>Will of God</b>
<b>Religious Structure/ Organization--- →</b>	<b>Will of God</b>
<b>Religious Law-----→</b>	<b>Will of God</b>

Calvin’s God was most certainly a “Catholic” God, in that, not unlike St. Thomas Aquinas and many other preeminent Catholic thinkers, Calvin believed that natural philosophy (i.e., the sciences) was indispensable for attaining *true religion*. True religion cannot entertain falsehood and superstition but must carefully anchor itself in truth. Therefore, Calvin insisted that, in order for there to be “true religion,” there must be a correct understanding of God’s nature.<sup>262</sup> In Book I of the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Calvin discusses three basic methods for knowing God (i.e. God’s will):

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<sup>262</sup> John Calvin, *God The Creator, God the Redeemer: Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Gainesville, FL.: Bridge-Logos, 2005), p. 11.

- A. Observing and studying the works of nature (i.e., the natural sciences; natural philosophy; and natural law)
- B. Observing God's Divine Providence within human history, affairs, and events; and,
- C. Studying the Sacred Scripture.

A correct understanding of God's nature could, of course, be attained through searching the Sacred Scriptures. But Calvin also believed that we could also observe and study God's created world and natural law (i.e., the natural sciences) for a correct understanding of God's nature and essence. Calvin thus observed:

In attestation of his wondrous wisdom, both the heavens and the earth present us with innumerable proofs not only those more recondite proofs which astronomy, medicine, and all the natural sciences, are designed to illustrate, but proofs which force themselves on the notice of the most illiterate peasant, who cannot open his eyes without beholding them. It is true, indeed, that those who are more or less intimately acquainted with those liberal studies are thereby assisted and enabled to obtain a deeper insight into the secret workings of divine wisdom. No man, however, though he is ignorant of these, is incapacitated for discerning such proofs of creative wisdom as may well cause him to break forth in admiration of the Creator. To investigate the motions of the heavenly bodies, to determine their positions, measure their distances, and ascertain their properties, demands skill, and a more careful examination; and where these are so employed, as the Providence of God is thereby more fully unfolded, so it is reasonable to suppose that the mind takes a loftier flight, and obtains brighter views of his glory. Still, none who have the use of their eyes can be ignorant of the divine skill manifested so conspicuously in the endless variety, yet distinct and well ordered array, of the heavenly host; and, therefore, it is plain that the Lord has furnished every man with abundant proofs of his wisdom. The same is true in regard to the structure of the human frame. To determine the connection of its parts, its symmetry and beauty, with the skill of a Galen, requires singular acuteness; and yet all men acknowledge that

the human body bears on its face such proofs of ingenious contrivance as are sufficient to proclaim the admirable wisdom of its Maker.<sup>263</sup>

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But though we are deficient in natural powers, which might enable us to rise to a pure and clear knowledge of God, still, as the dullness, which prevents us, is within, there is no room for excuse. We cannot plead ignorance, without being at the same time convicted by our own consciences both of sloth and ingratitude. It would be, indeed, a strange defense for man to pretend that he has no ears to hear the truth, while dumb creatures have voices loud enough to declare it; to allege that he is unable to see that which creatures without eyes demonstrate, to excuse himself on the ground of weakness of mind, while *all creatures without reason are able to teach*. Wherefore, when we wander and go astray, we are justly shut out from every species of excuse, because all things point to the right path. But while wonderously deposited in his mind, and preventing it from bearing good and genuine fruit, it is still most true that we are not sufficiently instructed by that bare and simple, but magnificent testimony which the creatures bear to the glory of their Creator. For no sooner do we, from a survey of the world, obtain some slight knowledge of Deity, than we pass by the true God, and set up in his stead the dream and phantom of our own brain, drawing away praise of justice, wisdom, and goodness, from the fountain-head, and transferring it to some other quarter. Moreover, by the erroneous estimate we form, we either so obscure or pervert his daily works, as at once to rob them of their glory and the author of them of his just praise.<sup>264</sup>

Thus, Calvin argued that the “works of God”—i.e., natural laws-- are readily visible and apparent for everyone-- even to the unlettered, untutored, and ignorant-- to observe for themselves. These works of God constitute “a mirror of his Deity.”<sup>265</sup> Calvin also notes that the *Book of Psalms* is filled with references to these same natural laws, which reveals God’s glory, “the general meaning is, that it is the proper school for training the children of God; the invitation given to all nations, to behold him in the heavens and earth....”<sup>266</sup> God’s word thus affirms the

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<sup>263</sup> Ibid., pp. 23-24.

<sup>264</sup> Ibid., p. 35.

<sup>265</sup> Ibid., p. 37.

<sup>266</sup> Ibid., p. 40.

validity of His works in nature as a reflection of his personality, order, system, law, etc.

These works are also God's laws of nature, which are open manifestations of himself, available to all nations. Presumably, a man might seek God and find the true religion simply by studying natural law. St. Paul reaches the same conclusion in *Romans* 2:14-15, where he states:

For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;) In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

But Calvin is not hopeful that true religion can be attained without the Sacred Scriptures. In fact, Calvin cites the errors of the stoics, epicureans, Egyptians, and several others who made grievous errors in their attempts to define gods or the true God.<sup>267</sup>

For this reason, Calvin holds that everyone who deviates from the true religion, which is the doctrine of salvation through Christ, actually corrupts pure religion.<sup>268</sup> Though all of humanity can readily observe God's wondrous works of nature and the natural law, and can conceivably reach the true religion by doing this law as a matter of conscience, even without the Sacred Scriptures, Calvin's reading of human history is quite pessimistic.

For example, Calvin writes: "God, says he, 'in times past, suffered all nations to walk in their own ways, Nevertheless, he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.' (Acts 14:16,17). But though God is not left without a witness, while, with numberless varied acts of kindness, he woos men to the knowledge of himself, yet they cease not to follow their own ways, in other words, deadly errors."<sup>269</sup>

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<sup>267</sup> Ibid., pp. 32-33.

<sup>268</sup> Ibid., pp. 33-34.

<sup>269</sup> Ibid., p. 35.



In addition, closely connected to the study of nature, Calvin also interposes the need of human beings to study themselves. Calvin concluded that “the knowledge of God and of ourselves” were intimately tied together. For Calvin, this “knowledge of ourselves [is] most necessary.”<sup>270</sup> When we examine ourselves, we began to understand the need for moral hygiene, for virtue, and religion. “[W]e were endued with reason and intelligence, in order that we might cultivate a holy and honorable life, and regard a blessed immortality as our destined aim.”<sup>271</sup> Calvin concluded that “true humbleness of mind” is essential, in order to off-set the “pretexts of pride” that is within us.<sup>272</sup> Hence, “ambition was the parent of rebellion.” “Augustine, indeed, is not far from the mark, when he says (Psalm 19), that pride was the beginning of all evil, because, had not man’s ambition carried him higher than he was permitted, he might have continued in his first estate.”<sup>273</sup> We should not focus on man’s good qualities, because the sin that is within him is so overwhelming. A good analogy is to consider the institution of marriage and the very high divorce rate in the United States. What causes such a high divorce rate, despite the very best of intentions to live up to perfection? Calvin responds by saying that knowledge of ourselves is essential to provide an adequate answer:

Hence, in considering the knowledge which man ought to have of himself, it seems proper to divide it thus, first, to consider the end for which he was created, and the qualities—by no means contemptible qualities—with which he was endued, thus urge him to meditate on divine worship and the future life; and, secondly, to consider his faculties, or rather want of faculties—a want which, when perceived, will annihilate all his confidence, and cover him with confusion. The tendency of the former view is to teach him what his duty is, of the latter, to make him aware how far he is able to perform it.<sup>274</sup>

Human beings did not create human nature. The architect of human nature, who is God, created human nature. According to Calvin, it followed that human nature was a reflection of God’s own nature. Therefore, it is impossible to believe that God, the maker of rational, thinking human beings, is not Himself a rational,

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<sup>270</sup> Ibid., p. 206.

<sup>271</sup> Ibid., p. 207.

<sup>272</sup> Ibid., p. 210.

<sup>273</sup> Ibid., p. 209.

<sup>274</sup> Ibid., p. 209.

thinking Being.<sup>275</sup> For this reason, Calvin rejected the idea of “deism,” even though the name “deism” had not yet been coined during his lifetime.

Calvin recalled various philosophers who imagined that God was an unthinking, cosmic force in the universe,-- a god whom they sometimes referred to as “Nature,” and thereby presumed that the “earth created itself.” Calvin thus observed: “[t]he meaning of all this is, that the world, which was made to display the glory of God, *is its own creator....* The plain object is to form an unsubstantial deity, and thereby banish the true God whom we ought to fear and worship. I admit, indeed, that the expressions ‘Nature is God,’ may be piously used, if dictated by a pious mind; but as it is inaccurate and harsh (Nature being more properly the order which has been established by God), in matters which are so very important, and in regard to which special reverence is due, *it does harm to confound the Deity with the inferior operations of his hands.*”<sup>276</sup> In other words, Calvin believed in the natural law, but admonished that the natural law is not God, but is rather God’s creation.

In summary, Calvin believed that “the omnipotence, eternity, and goodness of God” may be understood from studying the natural law, which he called “the ordinary course of nature.”<sup>277</sup> He thus concludes that the “mere fact of creation should lead us to acknowledge God”; however, God had also furnished his Sacred Scriptures “to prevent our falling away to Gentile fictions.”<sup>278</sup>

According to Calvin, natural law is manifest in the Mosaic Law (i.e., in the Law of Moses). This “Law was committed to writing, in order that it might teach more fully and perfectly that knowledge, both of God and of ourselves, which the law of nature teaches....”<sup>279</sup> The law of nature (i.e., “natural law”) is contained in the Ten Commandments, which is a manifestation of God.<sup>280</sup> “From the knowledge of God, furnished by the Law, we learn that God is our Father and Ruler.”<sup>281</sup>

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<sup>275</sup> Ibid., p. 25.

<sup>276</sup> Ibid., p. 27.

<sup>277</sup> Ibid., p. 27.

<sup>278</sup> Ibid., p. 127.

<sup>279</sup> Ibid., p. 327.

<sup>280</sup> Ibid., pp. 327-388.

<sup>281</sup> Ibid., p. 327.

Importantly, Calvin points out that the Preface to the Ten Commandments points out that “deliverance from Egypt” so that it remain in our remembrance as edifice of God’s power but also as a forewarning that slavery is a consequences of divine disobedience.<sup>282</sup>

The First Commandment, “THOU SHALT HAVE NO OTHER GODS BEFORE ME,” forewarns against, among other things, polytheism, atheism, idolatry, and agnosticism.

The Second Commandment, “THOU SHALT NOT MAKE UNTO THEE ANY GRAVEN IMAGES...,” forewarns against idolatry and superstition. The Second Commandment adds, “I THE LORD THY GOD AM A JEALOUS GOD...,” in order to forewarn against lethargy, moral relativity, moral cowardice, and disobedience.

The Third Commandment, “THOU SHALT NOT TAKE THE NAME OF THE LORD THY GOD IN VAIN,” essentially forewarns against lying under oath, bearing false witness, and especially invoking the solemnity of God while doing so.

The Fourth Commandment, “REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY TO KEEP IT HOLY...” reminds us that we are set aside time for spiritual labor in the Lord, “that the work of God in us may not be hindered.”<sup>283</sup>

The Fifth Commandment, “HONOR THEY FATHER AND THEY MOTHER...,” requires reverence, obedience, and gratitude, regardless of whether a parent deserves these or not.<sup>284</sup>

The Sixth Commandment, “THOU SHALT NOT KILL,” mandates not only that we do not murder, but also that we do not maintain the hatred within the heart that can lead to murder.<sup>285</sup>

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<sup>282</sup> Ibid., pp. 328; 344-345.

<sup>283</sup> Ibid., p. 330 (“Taking a simpler view of the commandment, the number is of no consequence, provided we maintain the doctrine of a perpetual rest from all our works, and, at the same time, avoid a superstitious observance of days. The ceremonial part of the commandment abolished by the advent of Christ.”).

<sup>284</sup> Ibid., pp. 330, 362-363.

<sup>285</sup> Ibid., pp. 330-331; 365-366.

The Seventh Commandment, “THOU SHALT NOT COMMIT ADULTERY,” mandates that sexual activity must occur within the institution of heterosexual marriage; celibacy is required outside of marriage; and fornication is strictly forbidden.<sup>286</sup>

The Eight Commandment, “THOU SHALT NOT STEAL,” prohibits not only theft, but also forbids the covetousness within the human heart that leads to theft.<sup>287</sup>

The Ninth Commandment, “THOU SHALT NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS AGAINST THY NEIGHBOR,” prohibits both public and private statements that are false, and mandates a pursuit of the truth.<sup>288</sup>

And the Tenth Commandment, “THOU SHALT NOT COVET THY NEIGHBOR’S HOUSE... WIFE... MANSERVANT...MAIDSERVANT... OX...ASS...NOR ANYTHING THAT IS THY NEIGHBOR’S,” requires that we take no actions that willfully causes loss to our neighbor and that we cultivate an inward righteousness and holiness, “[s]ince the Lord would have the whole sole pervaded with love....”<sup>289</sup>

For this reason, the religious duty of the Christian is thus to cultivate “righteousness” and to shun “iniquity.”<sup>290</sup> This religious duty implores us to learn all about ourselves—our inner selves—that we are really powerless to live up to the standards of the Ten Commandments, without breaking one or more of them. Calvin writes:

But every transgression of the Law lays us under the curse, and therefore even the slightest desires cannot be exempted from the fatal sentence. ‘In weighing our sins,’ says Augustine, ‘let us know use a deceitful balance, weighing at our own discretion what we will, and how we will, calling this heavy and that light: but let us use the divine balance of the Holy Scriptures, as taken from the treasury of the Lord, and by it weigh every offence, nay, not weigh, but rather recognize

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<sup>286</sup> Ibid., pp. 331, 367-369.

<sup>287</sup> Ibid., pp. 331, 370-372.

<sup>288</sup> Ibid., pp. 33, 372-374.

<sup>289</sup> Ibid., p. 374.

<sup>290</sup> Ibid.

what has been already weighed by the Lord.’ And what saith the Scripture? Certainly when Paul says, that ‘the wages of sin is death’ (Romans 6:23), he shows that he knew nothing of this vile distinction [of the Catholic Schoolmen, who reasoned that certain innocent thoughts (i.e., venial transgressions) might not actually violate the Law].<sup>291</sup>

Moreover, our self-acknowledged powerless should lead to our humility and solemn request to God for his grace (i.e., Christ).<sup>292</sup> True religion is thus “obedience” to the natural law, i.e., to God. False religion consists of “superstition and hypocritical modes of worship,” whereas true religion is simply solemn obedience to God, through his grace (i.e., Christ). Religion thus deals with the condition of the heart, not simply outward conformity. Human laws (e.g., civil laws, require outward conformity), but true religion requires “inward and spiritual righteousness.”<sup>293</sup> This inward and spiritual righteousness comes through a process known as “born-again” in Christ. For this reason, Christ is not simply another lawgiver, like Moses. Instead, Christ is the actual grace given by God as atonement for our transgressions and sins.<sup>294</sup>

Calvin also concluded that we can readily observe the essence and personality of God through the study of human affairs, events, and history. His conclusion was that God works in the course of human events and is the Supreme Governor of those events. “After learning that there is a Creator, it must forthwith infer that he is also a Governor and Preserver”<sup>295</sup>; “God claims omnipotence to himself”<sup>296</sup>; “God is the primary agent, because the beginning and cause of all motion”<sup>297</sup>; “the Providence of God, as taught in Scripture, is opposed to fortune and fortuitous causes”<sup>298</sup>; “the beginning of all motion belongs to God”<sup>299</sup>; and “that everything done in the world is according to his decree.”<sup>300</sup>

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<sup>291</sup> Ibid., p. 382.

<sup>292</sup> Ibid., pp. 327-388.

<sup>293</sup> Ibid., p. 328.

<sup>294</sup> Ibid., pp. 327-388.

<sup>295</sup> Ibid., p. 162.

<sup>296</sup> Ibid., p. 164.

<sup>297</sup> Ibid., p. 165.

<sup>298</sup> Ibid., p. 163.

<sup>299</sup> Ibid., p. 167.

<sup>300</sup> Ibid., p. 168.

Specifically, Calvin also believed in Divine Providence and in the miraculous power of God, whereby God intervenes and changes “the ordinary course of nature” in order to establish justice or to make His will and presence are manifest in everyday life. Similar to St. Augustine’s observations on Providence in *The City of God*, Calvin believed that God’s correcting hand and omnipotent justice could be readily observed through the careful study of human events:

For in conducting the affairs of men, he so arranges the course of his providence, as daily to declare, by the clearest manifestations, that though all are in innumerable ways the partakers of his bounty, the righteous are the special objects of his favor, the wicked and profane the special objects of his severity. It is impossible to doubt his punishment of crimes; while at the same time he, in no unequivocal manner, declares that he is the protector, and even the avenger of innocence, by shedding blessings on the good, helping their necessities, soothing and solacing their grief, relieving their sufferings, and in all ways providing for their safety. And though he often permits the guilty to exult for a time with impunity, and the innocent to be driven to and fro in adversity, nay, even to be wickedly and iniquitously oppressed, this ought not to produce any uncertainty as to the uniform justice of all his procedure. Nay, an opposite inference should be drawn. When anyone crime calls forth visible manifestations of his anger, it must be because he hates all crimes; and, on the other hand, his leaving many crimes unpunished, only proves that there is a Judgment in reserve, when the punishment now delayed shall be inflicted....

To this purpose the Psalmist (Psalm 107) mentioning how God, in a wondrous manner, often brings sudden and unexpected succor to the miserable when almost on the brink of despair, whether in protecting them when they stray in deserts, and at length leading them back into the right path, or supplying them with food when famishing for want, or delivering them when captive from iron fetters and foul dungeons, or conducting them safe into harbor after shipwreck, or bringing them back from the gates of death by curing their diseases, or, after burning up the fields with heat and drought, fertilizing them with the river of



his grace, or exalting the meanest of the people, and casting down the might from their lofty seats:-- the Psalmist... infers that those things which men call fortuitous events, are so many proofs of divine providence....<sup>301</sup>

The Old Testament wherein the history of the Israelites is preserved offers a perfect description of God's Providence.<sup>302</sup> Like St. Augustine, Calvin refutes the Stoic's understanding and definition of "fate." God's foreknowledge of events must not be confused with "fate"; nor does this foreknowledge diminish the voluntariness of the human will to turn towards God's grace. Nor does Calvin accept the doctrine of fortune, luck, chance, and the like. In reaching these theological conclusions, Calvin wholly embraces the doctrine of Providence as set forth in St. Augustine's *On Grace and Free Will*. Calvin thus writes:

In short, Augustine everywhere teaches that if anything is left to fortune, the world moves at random. And although he elsewhere declares that all things are carried on, partly by the free will of man, and partly by the Providence of God, he shortly after shows clearly enough that his meaning was, that men also are ruled by Providence, when he assumes it is a principle, that there cannot be a greater absurdity than to hold that anything is done without the ordination of God; because it would happen at random. For which reason, he also excludes the contingency which depends on human will, maintaining a little further on, in clearer terms, that no cause must be sought for but the will of God. When he uses the term permission, the meaning that he attaches to it will best appear from a single passage, where he proves that the will of God is the supreme and primary cause of all things, because nothing happens without his order or permission.<sup>303</sup>

Within Calvin's theological system, a belief in Divine Providence, where God has foreknowledge and omnipotence over all events, is an essential component to the Christian faith. "[A]ll things are divinely ordained," wrote Calvin.<sup>304</sup> "[T]he counsel of God was in accordance with the highest reason, that

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<sup>301</sup> Ibid., pp. 28-29.

<sup>302</sup> Ibid., pp. 169-170.

<sup>303</sup> Ibid., p. 171.

<sup>304</sup> Ibid., p. 177.

his purpose was either to train his people to patience, correct their depraved affections, tame their wantonness, inure them to self-denial, and arouse them from torpor; or, on the other hand, to cast down the proud, defeat the craftiness of the ungodly, and frustrate all their schemes. No matter how many causes may escape our notice, we must feel assured that they are deposited with [God].”<sup>305</sup> “To this the words of Augustine refer, ‘As we do not know all the things which God does respecting us in the best order, we ought, with good intention, to act according to the Law, and in some things be acted upon according to the Law, his Providence being a Law immutable.’”<sup>306</sup> Again, Calvin contends that we may observe God’s work (i.e., his Divine Providence) in human history, affairs, and events.

Finally, and without going into a lengthy discussion here, Calvin concluded that the Sacred Scriptures were divinely inspired and clearly reveal God’s essence and personality.<sup>307</sup> Calvin establishes Moses credibility on the ground that the ancient Israelites would not have embraced his laws if the underlying factual predicate was nonexistent. In other words, the story of Exodus would have been utterly rejected by the ancient Israelites, had not Moses actually performed the miracles before their very eyes. “Moses published all these things in the assembly of the people. How, then, could he possibly impose on the very eyewitnesses of what was done? Is it conceivable that he would have come forward, and, while accusing the people of unbelief, obstinacy, ingratitude, and other crimes, have boasted that his doctrine had been confirmed in their own presence by miracles, which they never saw?”<sup>308</sup> For Calvin, this and “numerous proofs... fully vindicate the credibility of Moses, and place it beyond dispute, that he was in truth a messenger sent forth from God.”<sup>309</sup>

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<sup>305</sup> Ibid.

<sup>306</sup> Ibid., p. 179.

<sup>307</sup> Ibid., p. 44-61.

<sup>308</sup> Ibid., p. 55.

<sup>309</sup> Ibid.

**Appendix 1-D.**  
**THEOLOGY OF JOHN CALVIN:**  
***On the Holy Trinity***

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Calvin held to the belief that there is only one God who has three manifestations, as follows:

God – eternal cause and beginning of Creation; omniscience (God the Father)

God—eternal law; rational order of Creation; wisdom (God the Son); and

God—eternal power and energy animating the cosmos (God the Spirit).

Calvin took this theology directly from Genesis 1:26, where Moses introduces God as saying, “Let us make man in our own image.” From the passage of Scripture, Calvin thus concludes:

Pious readers, however, see how frigidly and absurdly the colloquy were introduced by Moses, if there were not several persons in the Godhead. It is certain that those whom the Father addresses must have been untreated. But nothing is untreated except the one God. Now then, unless they concede that the power of creating was common to the Father, Son, and Spirit, and the power of commanding common, it will follow that God did not speak thus inwardly with himself, but addressed other extraneous architects.<sup>310</sup>

Furthermore, Calvin makes no bones about his belief that the “God of Israel” is “he who is celebrated by Christ and the apostles.”<sup>311</sup> Borrowing from Tertullian, Calvin writes: “[t]hough his style is sometimes rugged and obscure, he delivers the doctrine which we maintain in no ambiguous manner, namely, that while there is one God, his Word, however, is with dispensation or economy; that there is only one God in unity of substance; but that, nevertheless, by the mystery of

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<sup>310</sup> Ibid., p. 119.

<sup>311</sup> Ibid., p. 122.

dispensation, the unity is arranged into Trinity; that there are three, not in state, but in degree—not in substance, but in form—not in power, but in order.”<sup>312</sup>

And in another place, Calvin writes: “[f]or the mind of every man naturally inclines to consider, first, God, secondly, the wisdom emerging from him, and, lastly, the energy by which he executes the purposes of his counsel. For this reason, the Son is said to be of the Father only, and the Spirit of both the Father and the Son.”<sup>313</sup> And, finally, turning to the great St. Augustine for a more precise definition of the Holy Trinity, Calvin writes:

St. Augustine says, “‘Christ, as to himself, is called God, as to the Father he is called Son.’ And again, ‘The Father, as to himself, is called God, as to the Son he is called Father. He who, as to the Son, is called Father, is not Son; and he who, as to himself, is called Father, and he who, as to himself, is called Son, is the same God.’”<sup>314</sup>

Importantly, we should understand precisely how Calvin saw Jesus of Nazareth within the Holy Trinity. Calvin viewed Jesus as the Logos. Calvin wrote that “the Logos was God”<sup>315</sup> and that “the eternal Word of God was the Spirit of Christ with God.”<sup>316</sup> Within the Holy Trinity, Jesus Christ is the manifestation of God’s wisdom. Calvin thus suggested that “[f]or the mind of every man naturally inclines to consider, first, God, secondly, the wisdom emerging from him [i.e., Christ], and, lastly, the energy [i.e., the Holy Spirit] by which he executes the purposes of his counsel. For this reason, the Son is said to be of the Father only, and the Spirit of both the Father and the Son.”<sup>317</sup>

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<sup>312</sup> Ibid., p. 122.

<sup>313</sup> Ibid., p. 111.

<sup>314</sup> Ibid., p. 112.

<sup>315</sup> Ibid., p. 115.

<sup>316</sup> Ibid., p. 115.

<sup>317</sup> Ibid., p. 111.

## Appendix 1-E.

### THEOLOGY OF JOHN CALVIN:

#### *On God as Justice*

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Significantly, Calvin concludes that “justice” is one of God’s “essential attributes.”<sup>318</sup> Calvin rejects randomness, inconsequential events, and the term “fate” as used by the Stoics;<sup>319</sup> because, for Calvin, God maintains complete control over all events which culminate in divine justice. In other words, God’s secret movements within human affairs inevitably culminate in His justice and just judgments. Calvin writes:

With regard to secret movements, what Solomon says of the heart of a king, that it is turned hither and thither, as God sees meet, certainly applies to the whole human race, and has the same force as if he had said, that whatever we conceive in our minds is directed to its end by the secret inspiration of God... because he bends them to execute his Judgment, just as if they carried their orders engraved on their minds.<sup>320</sup>

For this reason, Calvin concludes that wise legislation and good government can come about only through first consulting the counsel of God, “—since the will of God is said to be the cause of all things, all the counsels and actions of men must be held to be governed by his providence; so that he not only exerts his power in the elect, who are guided by the Holy Spirit, but also forces the reprobate to do him service.”<sup>321</sup>

For Calvin, the injustices which exists in the world are due in large measure to human beings’ voluntary wills and defections away from the will of God; but God, through His desire to see human beings reconciled to Him, will endure for a

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<sup>318</sup> Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>319</sup> “Those who would cast obloquy on this doctrine, calumniate it as the dogma of the Stoics concerning fate. The same charge was formerly brought against Augustine. We are unwilling to dispute about words; but we do not admit the term Fate, both because it is of the class which Paul teaches us to shun, as profane novelties (1 Timothy 6:20), and also because it is attempted, by means of an odious term, to fix a stigma on the truth of God.” Ibid., p. 170.

<sup>320</sup> Ibid., p. 195.

<sup>321</sup> Ibid., p. 197.

season and suffer injustices.<sup>322</sup> Notwithstanding, God's "secret counsels govern the world";<sup>323</sup> "God, by the curb of his Providence, turns events in whatever direction he pleases";<sup>324</sup> and "the incomprehensible counsel of God governs every event."<sup>325</sup> For this reason, Calvin states that Christians should heed the counsel of St. Augustine, who writes: " 'As we do not know all the things which God does respecting us in the best order, we ought, with good intention, to act according to the Law, and in some things be acted upon according to the Law, his Providence being a Law immutable.' ",<sup>326</sup>

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<sup>322</sup> Ibid., pp. 191-192.

<sup>323</sup> Ibid., p. 178.

<sup>324</sup> Ibid., p. 172.

<sup>325</sup> Ibid., p. 178.

<sup>326</sup> Ibid., p. 179.



## Appendix 1-F.

### THEOLOGY OF JOHN CALVIN:

#### *On the Human Conscience*

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Calvin was a natural-law legal theorist who embraced the concept of the “moral law” that is implanted within the human conscience. He called the conscience the seat of the human spirit inside of the body. This conscience is evidence of man’s divine origin in God. “Conscience, which, distinguishing, between good and evil,” Calvin wrote, “responds to the Judgment of God, is an undoubted sign of an immortal spirit.”<sup>327</sup> “We have ideas of rectitude, justice, and honesty—ideas that the bodily senses cannot reach. The seat of these ideas must therefore be a spirit.”<sup>328</sup>

God communicates through each man’s internal and inward conscience. Calvin thus observed that the “Divine Law... is instructed not merely in outward decency but in inward spiritual righteousness.... Should a king issue an edict prohibiting murder, adultery, and theft, the penalty, I admit, will not be incurred by the man who has only felt a longing in his mind after these vices, but has not actually committed them. The reason is that a human lawgiver does not extend his care beyond outward order, and, therefore, his injunctions are not violated without outward acts. But God, whose eye nothing escapes, and who regards not the outward appearance so much as purity of heart, under the prohibition of murder, adultery, and theft includes wrath, hatred, lust, covetousness, and all other things of a similar nature. Being a spiritual Lawgiver, he speaks to the soul not less than the body. The murder, which the soul commits, is wrath and hatred; the theft, covetousness and avarice; and the adultery, lust.”<sup>329</sup>

Where does the human sense of guilt and shame arise? According to Calvin, they arise in the “soul,” which is the “conscience.” And this proves that the soul’s essence and existence is in God. The Creator of the human soul is God, who is the Great Soul. And so when the conscience is disturbed with shame or guilt, it

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<sup>327</sup> Ibid., p. 149.

<sup>328</sup> Ibid., p. 150.

<sup>329</sup> Ibid., p. 337.

responds to a spiritual severance from its eternal source, which is God. Calvin thus observes:

How could motion devoid of essence penetrate to the Judgment-seat of God, and under *a sense of guilt* strike itself with terror? The body cannot be affected by any fear of spiritual punishment. This is competent only to the soul, which must therefore be endued with essence. Then the mere knowledge of a God sufficiently proves that souls, which rise higher than the world, must be immortal, it being impossible that any evanescent vigour could reach the very fountain of life.<sup>330</sup>

“In fine, while the many noble faculties with which the human mind is endued proclaim that something divine is engraved on it, they are so many evidences of an immortal essence.”<sup>331</sup>

For such sense as the lower animals possess goes not beyond the body, or at least not beyond the objects actually presented to it. But the swiftness with which the human mind glances from heaven to earth, scans the secrets of nature, and, after it has embraced all ages, with intellect and memory digests each in its proper order, and reads the future in the past, clearly demonstrates that there lurks in man a something separated from the body, Scripture would not teach that we dwell in houses of clay, and at death remove from a tabernacle of flesh; that we put off that which is corruptible, in order that, at the last day, we may finally receive according to the deeds done in the body.<sup>332</sup>

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<sup>330</sup> Ibid., pp. 149-150.

<sup>331</sup> Ibid., p. 150.

<sup>332</sup> Ibid.

## Appendix 1-G.

### THEOLOGY OF JOHN CALVIN:

#### *On the Natural Law*

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John Calvin bequeathed to the Protestant Reformation both Augustine's and Aquinas' theology and philosophy of natural law.<sup>333</sup> And in England, the Presbyterians, Puritans, and Baptists incorporated Calvin's theology on natural law into their respective theological worldviews.<sup>334</sup> For Calvin, "equity" was a critical component linking the Bible to the secular civil legal system. Calvin believed that the fundamental purpose of the civil law and constitution was to achieve equity (i.e., justice). Calvin argued that "equity" needed to be read into statutory or constitutional language, in order to promote justice, and he inveighed against those jurists "who would confine his understanding of the law within the narrowness of the words."<sup>335</sup>

For this reason, Calvin contended that various forms of government and different types of laws may be adopted in order to accommodate different cultures, societies, and circumstances, so long as those laws' intended objective is to achieve equity. "Equity," Calvin wrote, "because it is natural, cannot but be the same for all, and therefore, this same purpose ought to apply to all laws, whatever their object. Constitutions have certain circumstances upon which they in part depend. It therefore does not matter that they are different, provided all equally press toward the same goal of equity."<sup>336</sup> "Thus, some scholars consider that for Calvin the 'basic ethical principle... is equity.'"<sup>337</sup>

Calvin reached the same conclusion that natural law is what linked the Bible to the civil state. To that end, his fundamental legal philosophy was no different than St. Thomas Aquinas', to wit: eternal law---→divine law---→natural law---→human (civil) law. Although he recommended that the church be separated from the state, he also held that both church and state shared jurisdiction over the same

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<sup>333</sup> Norman Doe, *Christianity and Natural Law* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2017), pp. 121-139.

<sup>334</sup> Ibid.

<sup>335</sup> Ibid, p. 126.

<sup>336</sup> Ibid.

<sup>337</sup> Ibid.

fundamental law of nature, pursuant to his “two kingdoms” theory<sup>338</sup>. The laws of the Christian polity, even where there was a separation of the Church from the State, must be subordinate to natural law and the divine laws of God.

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<sup>338</sup> “In the Reformed tradition, the triune God rules over all human beings both in the civil kingdom and in the spiritual kingdom. Both kingdoms are regulated by divine law. The two kingdoms doctrine has natural law as its ‘natural’ correlate. It seems as if the natural law/ two kingdoms tradition was an integral part of Reformed theology and church polity from John Calvin onward.” Ibid, pp. 138-139.

## Appendix 1-H.

### THEOLOGY OF JOHN CALVIN:

#### *On the Human Slavery*

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St. Augustine of Hippo has given the definitive position of the Christian position on slavery as “unnatural” “penal servitude,” which is the product of “sin.”<sup>339</sup> Augustine holds that human slavery does not comport with God’s will. “He did not intend,” he wrote, “that His rational creature, who was made in His image, should have dominion over anything but the irrational creation—not man over man, but man over the beasts.”<sup>340</sup> But when sin entered the world, some men became “the servant of sin,” which oftentimes led to their “penal servitude” to the others. Thus viewed from St. Augustine’s perspective, slavery originated as “with justice” in hand, as a form of criminal punishment. “But by nature,” he wrote, “as God first created us, no one is the slave either of man or of sin.”<sup>341</sup>

Similarly, John Calvin believed that for so long as we remain in our current miserable state, the master-slave relation should be equitably regulated with the view toward ultimate manumission of the slave. He wrote:

*For each human being is a reasonable creature. And this derived from sin, as one evil triggers another, until things descend into utter confusion. But if we examine the rights which masters had, we shall conclude every time that this is something which is contrary to the whole order of nature. For we are all fashioned after the image of God, and it was thus altogether too exorbitant that a reasonable creature upon whom God has stamped his mark should be put to such insulting condition. But such are the fruits of the disobedience and sin of our first father Adam: it has resulted in all things being turned upside down.*

Thus commenting in a sermon on Genesis 12, Calvin said:

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<sup>339</sup> St. Augustine, *The City of God* (New York, NY: The Modern Library, 1950), pp. 693-694.

<sup>340</sup> Ibid, p. 693.

<sup>341</sup> Ibid, p. 694.

*“Soon after the deluge it happened that most of the human race lost the freedom that was by nature common to everyone. Now, whether the first enslaved humans had been crushed by the conquest or compelled by poverty, the natural order had certainly been corrupted by violence; for human beings had been created to have and sustain society to their mutual advantage. And although it is necessary for some to have stewardship over the others, we ought rather to maintain equality among brethren.”*

Thus commenting in a sermon on Deuteronomy Calvin said:

*The same punishment [death] is here deservedly denounced against man-stealers as against murderers; for, so wretched was the condition of slaves, that liberty was more than half of life; and hence to deprive a man of such a great blessing, was almost to destroy him. Besides, it is not man-stealing only which is here condemned, but the accompanying evils of cruelty and fraud, i.e., if he, who had stolen a man, had likewise sold him....*

*But now, seeing that human beings cannot get used to acting properly towards their neighbors, and would not willingly abandon their rights when they have the advantage, while only with great difficulty can one force them to do what they ought, our Lord therefore made this proposal to them, saying, Behold, those who release their slaves will render me a service I appreciate and I give you as a sign of this ... the day of rest. Know then, that when that sign is given you are giving relief to your slaves at my behest, and I am there in the midst, overseeing that act; and you are doing it because of me.*

And in a sermon on Paul's letter to Philemon, Calvin said:

*Paul therefore reminds Philemon that he ought not to be so greatly offended at the flight of his slave, for it was the cause of a benefit not to be regretted. So long as Onesimus was at heart a runaway, Philemon, though he had him in his house, did not actually enjoy him as his property; for he was wicked and unfaithful, and could not be of real advantage. He says, therefore, that he was a wanderer for a little*



*time, that, by changing his place, he might be converted and become a new man.*

*He next brings forward another advantage of the flight, that Onesimus has not only been corrected by means of it, so as to become a useful slave, but that he has become the “brother” of his master... Hence (Paul) infers that Philemon is much more closely related to him, because both of them had the same relationship in the Lord according to the Spirit, but, according to the flesh, Onesimus is a member of his family. Here we behold the uncommon modesty of Paul, who bestows on a worthless slave the title of a brother, and even calls him a dearly beloved brother to himself. And, indeed, it would be excessive pride, if we should be ashamed of acknowledging as our brother those whom God accounts to be his sons.*

In sum, Calvin clearly adopted St. Augustine’s viewpoints on human slavery. “Despite his reticence or lack of interest in speaking to the European institution of slavery, Calvin does address slavery in a principled manner when the biblical text calls for it. Logically prior for Calvin is the fact that slavery is not rooted in the natural order of things (nor any principle of natural law), but rather is a detestable postlapsarian phenomenon, a consequence of sin, the fall of humankind, and the marred *imago Dei*. Consider his sermon on Ephesians 6.”<sup>342</sup> “By way of summary: (1) Calvin has a negative view of slavery overall because it is contrary to the created order, but (2) he supports its divine mandate and regulation in the Old Covenant, as a safeguard against sin and abuse. (3) Calvin believes that slaves should be treated with equality, but this does not mean abrogating the master-slave relationship. If we may also make some broader theological observations: Calvin aims to exegete the text on its own terms and within its original historical context.”<sup>343</sup> From this perspective, Calvin did not support slavery and seemed to conclude that it was a necessary evil due wholly to the Original Sin and the Fall of Man.

It is important here to point out that, “[i]n the nineteenth century, the churches that were based on Calvin's theology or influenced by it were deeply

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<sup>342</sup> “All Things Turned Upside Down”—Calvin on Slavery” <https://politicaltheology.com/all-things-turned-upside-down-calvin-on-slavery/>

<sup>343</sup> Ibid.

involved in social reforms, e.g. the abolition of slavery (William Wilberforce, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Abraham Lincoln, and others), women suffrage, and prison reforms. Members of these churches formed co-operatives to help the impoverished masses. Henry Dunant, a Reformed pietist, founded the Red Cross and initiated the Geneva Conventions.”<sup>344</sup>

For additional information regarding the influences of Calvinism upon the Black Church and the African American experience in the United States, see Appendix 3, “African Americans and the Reformed Tradition.”

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<sup>344</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Calvinism>

## Appendix 1-J.

### THEOLOGY OF JOHN CALVIN:

#### *On Idolatry in Roman Catholicism*

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A fundamental reason that John Calvin rejected the Roman Catholic Church was his belief that this church's liturgical practices constituted idolatry—that is to say, that it substituted God (including Christ) with statutes, symbols, holidays, and the veneration of the Virgin Mary and other saints. Calvin believed that, as a consequence, the Roman mass forced the human mind into superstition and thus tainted what he called “pure religion.”

For Calvin, “pure religion” is rooted in reason and is the mirror of reality itself, which is the mind of God. “[P]ure religion,” wrote Calvin, “differs from superstition...”<sup>345</sup>; “superstition seems to take its name from its not being contended with the measure, which reason prescribes....”<sup>346</sup> Superstition is thus the enemy of reason. “[R]eligion is vitiated and perverted whenever false opinions are introduced into it...”<sup>347</sup> Calvin concludes that “unless everything peculiar to divinity is confined to God alone, he is robbed of his honor, and his worship is violated.”<sup>348</sup> Calvin also argued that “if we would have one God, let us remember that we can never appropriate the minutest portion of his glory without retaining what is his due.”<sup>349</sup> He based this position upon his understanding of the First Commandment (i.e., in the Ten Commandments). This First Commandment says:

I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before me.  
**You shall not make for yourself a graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them or serve them.**

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<sup>345</sup> Ibid., p. 87.

<sup>346</sup> Ibid., p. 88.

<sup>347</sup> Ibid., p. 88.

<sup>348</sup> Ibid., p. 88.

<sup>349</sup> Ibid., p. 90.

According to Calvin, the Catholic mode of worship, which placed great veneration upon the Virgin Mary and scores of Christian saints, were troublingly sacrilegious. He believed that the Catholic mass created “a tribe of minor deities, among whom it portions out his peculiar offices.”<sup>350</sup> This Catholic mass “dissected” “the glory of the Godhead,” and allocated to lesser deities a “share with the supreme God in the government of heaven and earth.”<sup>351</sup> Thus, the Catholic mass tended to cause Christians to be “deluded by these entanglements” and to “go astray after divers gods.”<sup>352</sup> Calvin wrote that “it is plain that the worship which Papists pay to saints differs in no respect from the worship of God.”<sup>353</sup> Calvin cites the following examples from the Bible:

When Paul reminds the Galatians of what they were before they came to the knowledge of God he says that they ‘did service unto them which by nature are no gods’ (Galatians 4:8)... When Christ repels Satan’s insulting proposal with the words, ‘It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve’ (Matthew 4:10), there was no question of latria. For all that Satan asked was proskunesiV (homage). In like manners when the angel rebukes John for falling on his knees before him (Revelation 18:10; 22:8,9), we ought not to suppose that John had so far forgotten himself as to intend to transfer the honor due to God alone to an angel.<sup>354</sup>

Even today, the differences between the Roman Catholic mass and liturgy and most mainstream Protestant services are remarkably unchanged since the days of John Calvin. For example, the contemporary Roman Catholic Church continues to embrace the same theology from the Second Council of Nicea of 787 A.D.<sup>355</sup>

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<sup>350</sup> Ibid., p. 88.

<sup>351</sup> Ibid., p. 88.

<sup>352</sup> Ibid., p. 88.

<sup>353</sup> Ibid., p. 89.

<sup>354</sup> Ibid., p. 89.

<sup>355</sup> In 787 A.D., the Roman Catholic Church held the Second Council of Nicaea, at which it set forth its official position on the use of “holy images”-- such as art, architecture, stained-glass windows, and statues-- in church. The modern-day second edition of the Catechism of the Catholic Church continues to incorporate the official views of the Second Council of Nicaea, to wit: “The sacred image, the liturgical icon, principally represents Christ. It cannot

Simultaneously, the contemporary Protestant Church continues to reject the Second Council of Nicea's position on the use of idols and its interpretation of the First Commandment. The twenty-first century Roman Catholic Church, however, continues to hold to its original position, since 787 A.D., to wit, that "[t]he veneration of sacred images is based on the mystery of the Incarnation of the Word of God. It is not contrary to the first commandment."<sup>356</sup> Simultaneously, twenty-first century Protestant churches continue to embrace John Calvin's vociferous and forceful disagreement with the Roman Catholic Church's interpretation of this divine First Commandment.

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represent the invisible and incomprehensible God, but the incarnation of the Son of God has ushered in a new 'economy' of images: 'Previously God, who has neither a body nor a face, absolutely could not be represented by an image. But now that he has made himself visible in the flesh and has lived with men, I can make an image of what I have seen of God... and contemplate the glory of the Lord, his face unveiled.' [St. John Damascene, *De imag.* 1, 16: PG 96:1245-1248. Christian iconography expresses in images the same Gospel message that Scripture communicates by words. Image and word illuminate each other: 'We declare that we preserve intact all the written and unwritten traditions of the Church which have been entrusted to us. One of these traditions consists in the production of representational artwork, which accords with the history of the preaching of the Gospel. For it confirms that the incarnation of the Word of God was real and not imaginary, and to our benefit as well, for realities that illustrate each other undoubtedly reflect each other's meaning.' [Council of Nicaea II (787): COD 111.] All the signs in the liturgical celebrations are related to Christ: as are sacred images of the holy Mother of God and of the saints as well. They truly signify Christ.... Following the divinely inspired teaching of our holy Fathers and the tradition of the Catholic Church (for we know that this tradition comes from the Holy Spirit who dwells in her) we rightly define with full certainty and correctness that, like the figure of the precious and life-giving cross, venerable and holy images of our Lord and God and Savior, Jesus Christ, our inviolate Lady, the holy Mother of God, and the venerated angels, all the saints and the just, whether painted or made of mosaic or another suitable material, are to be exhibited in the holy churches of God, on sacred vessels and vestments, walls and panels, in houses and on streets. [Council of Nicaea II (787): COD 111.] 'The beauty of the images moves me to contemplation, as a meadow delights the eyes and subtly infuses the soul with the glory of God.' [St. John Damascene, *De imag.* 1, 16: PG 96:1245-1248.] Similarly, the contemplation of sacred icons, united with meditation on the Word of God and the singing of celebration so that the mystery celebrated is imprinted in the heart's memory and is then expressed in the new life of the faithful. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, (New York, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1995), pp. 328-329.

<sup>356</sup> Ibid., p. 574.

## Appendix 1-J.

### THEOLOGY OF JOHN CALVIN:

#### *On the True Catholic Church*

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In Book IV of the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, John Calvin defines the “true church” as distinguished from the Roman Catholic Church and thereby reshapes the constitutional law of Western Europe.

First, Calvin breaks from the Roman Catholic Church through affirming that there are two churches: “all the elect of God,” which is unseen, secret, and universal,<sup>357</sup> and “the visible Church” which consists of both the predestined elect of God and those who are predestined for eternal damnation. For this reason, Calvin admonished Christians to “believe ‘the Church, and not ‘in the Church.’”<sup>358</sup> Hence, for Calvin, the invisible Church is truly Catholic and Universal; but the visible Church is essentially a replica of the world, mixed with both good and evil. Calvin was clear to point out that there is no perfect church and that Church should tolerate and bear church imperfection. Calvin counseled Christians against withdrawing from a church anytime they perceive that there may be church corruption or impurity of doctrine. “If the Lord declares that the Church will labour under the defect of being burdened with a multitude of wicked until the day of judgment, it is in vain to look for a church altogether free from blemish, (Math. 13.)”<sup>359</sup> “The imperfect holiness of the church does not justify schism, but affords occasion for the exercise within it of the forgiveness of sins...”<sup>360</sup>

To Calvin, a church remains acceptable, for so long as the Gospel is preached and the Sacraments are administered. Thus, the primary objective of the visible Church is to preach the Gospel and to administer the Sacraments (i.e., Baptism; Eucharist). Other Church objectives included various forms of charity,

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<sup>357</sup> “Hence the Church is called Catholic and Universal.... All the elect of God are so joined together in Christ, that as they depend on one head, so they are as it were compacted into one body, being knit together like its different members; made truly one by living together under the same Spirit of God in one faith, hope, and charity, called not only to the same inheritance of eternal life, but to participation in one God and Christ.” Ibid, pp. 358-359.

<sup>358</sup> Ibid, p. 358.

<sup>359</sup> Ibid, p. 364.

<sup>360</sup> Ibid, pp. 365-369.



church discipline, maintenance of church doctrine, and pedagogy.<sup>361</sup> Meanwhile, the Church must admonish and forgive sinners. Calvin believed that the sins of individual Christians and “trivial errors” in Church practices should not result in Church schism.

Calvin emphatically rejected the idea that the Roman Catholic Church represented the true church that is apostolic, holy, and catholic. Calvin’s idea of the true Catholic Church was that it was a combination of independent, diverse churches throughout the entire world. These churches need not share the same bishops or elders nor utilize the same ecclesiastical form of government. Instead, the “Church universal is the multitude collected out of all nations, who, though dispersed and far distant from each other, agree in one truth of divine doctrines and are bound together by the tie of a common religion. In this way it comprehends single churches, which exist in different towns and villages, according to the wants of human society, so that each of them justly obtains the name and authority of the Church; and also comprehends single individuals, who by a religious profession are accounted to belong to such churches, although they are in fact aliens from the Church, but have not been cut off by a public decision.”<sup>362</sup>

Hence, Calvin firmly supported the idea of an independent, stand-alone, non-denominational church, and he emphatically rejected the Roman Catholic ideal that a true, authentic church should submit to the authority and jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome. Calvin wrote: “[w]hereever we see the word of God sincerely preached and heard, wherever we see the sacraments administered according to the institution of Christ, there we cannot have any doubt that the Church of God has some existence, since his promise cannot fail, ‘Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them,’ (Matth. 18:20).”<sup>363</sup>

Calvin reached the theological conclusion that schism is justified under one important condition: when church doctrine so corrupts “the word” of God and the “sacraments” of Christ that the primary and fundamental objective the Gospel is subverted. For this reason, Calvin argued that the Roman Catholic Church had subverted the Gospel of Christ and that Protestant Reformation was justified.<sup>364</sup>

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<sup>361</sup> Ibid, p. 362.

<sup>362</sup> Ibid, p. 362.

<sup>363</sup> Ibid.

<sup>364</sup> Ibid, pp. 385-528.

In summary, Calvin posted in his landmark *Institutes of the Christian* several dozen examples of how the Roman Catholic Church had subverted the Gospel and the Sacraments of Christ, such as the following:

- The Roman Catholic Church's claim over a monopoly of the Christian faith is not supported in the Sacred Scripture;<sup>365</sup>
- The Roman Catholic Churches' doctrine of Apostolic Succession is exaggerated: ("[t]hey therefore fall back on the assertion, that they have the true Church, because ever since it began to exist it was never destitute of bishops, because they succeeded each other in an unbroken series....");<sup>366</sup>
- The Roman Catholic Church's teachings on the Sacraments, which are signs of God's covenant and promise, were not based upon the Sacred Scripture, since only two of the Sacraments (i.e., Baptism, and Eucharist ("The Lord's Supper")) were valid, and the remaining five (i.e., Extreme Unction, Confirmation, Ordination, Penance, Holy Orders)<sup>367</sup> were invalid;<sup>368</sup>
- The Roman Catholic Church's celebration of the Eucharist (i.e., Catholic Mass) was not based upon the Sacred Scriptures;<sup>369</sup>
- The Roman Catholic Church's veneration for the Virgin Mary and the Saints improperly substituted veneration that is due to God alone;<sup>370</sup>
- The Roman Catholic Church's use of statutes and portraits of Christ, angles, saints, and other biblical figures throughout the Church is excessive, immodest, improper, and tends towards idolatry;<sup>371</sup>
- The Roman Catholic Church fails to account for various ancient churches in "Africa, and Egypt, and all Asia, just because in all those regions there was a cessation of that sacred succession, by the aid of which they vaunt having continued Churches";<sup>372</sup>

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<sup>365</sup> Ibid, pp. 370, 372, 407 ("To fix down Christ and the Holy Spirit and the Church to a particular spot, so that every one presides in it, should he be a devil, must still be deemed vicegerent of Christ, and the head of the Church, because that spot was formerly the See of Peter, is not only impious and insulting to Christ, but absurd and contrary to common sense.")

<sup>366</sup> Ibid.

<sup>367</sup> Ibid, pp. 515-528.

<sup>368</sup> Ibid, pp. 454-528.

<sup>369</sup> Ibid, pp. 508-515.

<sup>370</sup> Ibid, pp. 42-48.

<sup>371</sup> Ibid.

<sup>372</sup> Ibid, pp. 508-515.

- The Roman Catholic Church’s magisterium (i.e., “councils”) did not have a monopoly over the interpretation of the Sacred Scriptures;<sup>373</sup>
- The Roman Catholic Church disguised and subverted the Sacred Scriptures, just as the corrupt Jewish priests had done in the Old Testament, and just as the corrupt Pharisees and scribes had done in the New Testament;<sup>374</sup>
- The Roman Catholic Church had completely subverted the words of Christ as found in the Sacred Scriptures and thereby had become “the deadly adversaries of Christ”;<sup>375</sup>
- The Roman Catholic Church formed an arbitrary lordship over and enslaved consciences; for it had no authority to impose religious duties upon consciences, in order to avert purgatory or to avoid hell;<sup>376</sup>
- The Roman Catholic Church had falsely claimed that “the right of the sword was given them,” thus bestowing upon them “worldly power” and “princely powers”;<sup>377</sup>
- The Roman Catholic Church had become too legalistic and relied too heavily upon church lawyers to plead theological doctrine;<sup>378</sup>
- Roman Catholic priests and bishops had little or no “acquaintance with sacred doctrine”;<sup>379</sup>
- The Roman Catholic Church had wrongfully removed from the Church community the right to elect their own bishops;<sup>380</sup>
- Corruption and simony (the sale of church offices) dominated the appointment of Roman Catholic deacons, priests, and bishops;<sup>381</sup>
- The institution of Roman Catholic clerical orders had thus become corrupted;<sup>382</sup>

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<sup>373</sup> Ibid, p. 418.

<sup>374</sup> Ibid, pp. 370-371.

<sup>375</sup> Ibid, p. 371.

<sup>376</sup> Ibid, p. 419.

<sup>377</sup> Ibid, p. 434 (“Was it the part of bishops to entangle themselves with the cognizance of causes, and the administration of states and provinces, and embrace occupations so very alien to them—of bishops, who require so much time and labour in their own office, that though they devote themselves to it diligently and entirely, without distraction from other avocations, they are scarcely sufficient? ...[T]hey hesitate not to boast that in this way the dignity of Christ’s kingdom is duly maintained, and they, at the same time, are not withdrawn from their own vocation.”)

<sup>378</sup> Ibid, p. 385.

<sup>379</sup> Ibid.

<sup>380</sup> Ibid.

<sup>381</sup> Ibid, pp. 386-387.

<sup>382</sup> Ibid.

- The institution of monasteries (i.e., orders of monks, nuns) was unknown in the Sacred Scriptures;<sup>383</sup>
- The Roman Catholic Churches teachings on monasteries and the monastic life were either not based on the Sacred Scriptures or not based upon ancient Church traditions;<sup>384</sup>
- The monasteries had become notorious of their corruption and licentiousness throughout Western Europe;<sup>385</sup>
- The parishes were neglected and devoid of committed pastors; too many parish priests spend their time “devouring the revenues of churches which they never visit even for the purpose of inspection”;<sup>386</sup>
- The distribution of church income had degenerated into “plunder...to bishops and city presbyters”;<sup>387</sup>
- The Roman Catholic hierarchy defended its splendor and opulence on the basis of the false claim these dignified the Church and the Gospel and depicts “the splendor of Christ’s kingdom”—that “‘All kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him,’ (Ps. 72:11)”;<sup>388</sup>
- The Roman Catholic church’s use of its revenue “differs from the true diaconate” in that “they would allow thousands of the poor to perish sooner than break down the smallest cup or platter to relieve their necessity”;<sup>389</sup>
- The Roman Catholic Church’s teachings on priestly celibacy contradicts the Sacred Scripture;<sup>390</sup>

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<sup>383</sup> Ibid.

<sup>384</sup> Ibid., pp. 448-454.

<sup>385</sup> Ibid, pp. 386-387.

<sup>386</sup> Ibid, p. 388.

<sup>387</sup> Ibid, p. 390.

<sup>388</sup> Ibid.

<sup>389</sup> “That I may not decide too severely at my own hand, I would only ask the pious reader to consider what Exuperius, the Bishop of Thoulouse, whom we have mentioned, what Acatius, or Ambrose or any one like minded, if they were to rise from the dead, would say? Certainly, while the necessities of the poor are so great, they would not approve of their funds being carried away from them as superfluous; not to mention that, even were there no poor, the uses to which they are applied are noxious in many respects and useful in none. But I appeal not to men. These goods have been dedicated to Christ, and ought to be distributed at his pleasure. In vain, however, will they make that to be expenditure for Christ which they have squandered contrary to his commands, though, to confess the truth, the ordinary revenue of the Church is not much curtailed by these expenses. No bishoprics are so opulent, no abbacies so productive, in short, no benefices so numerous and ample, as to suffice for the gluttony of priests. But while they would spare themselves, they induce the people by superstition to employ what ought to have been distributed to the poor in building temples, erecting statues, buying plate, and providing costly garments. Thus the daily alms are swallowed up in this abyss.” Ibid, pp. 390-391.

<sup>390</sup> Ibid, pp. 443-445.

- The problems of Roman Catholic clerical corruption began as far back as Pope Gregory the Great's reign as Pope (circa, 590-604 A.D.);
- The Roman Catholic Church falsely claimed the Jesus' words to Peter bestowed upon the Roman Catholic Church the right "to bind upon us by a perpetual law";<sup>391</sup>
- The early Church held the Bishop of Rome in great esteem but did not consider him to be their universal bishop;<sup>392</sup> and Pope Gregory the Great (Gregory I) refused the title "Universal Bishop";<sup>393</sup>
- The authority and prestige of the 16th-century Popes developed over time, and was of recent development, but they were not authorized in the Sacred Scriptures;<sup>394</sup>
- The authority and prestige of the Bishop of Rome were derived chiefly from the fact that Rome had been seat of empire; when Constantinople became the new seat of empire, a struggle between the Bishop of Rome and the Bishop of Constantinople commenced for supremacy over the Church;<sup>395</sup>
- The Roman Catholic Church's claim to universal jurisdiction is a "great and atrocious injustice... to other bishops";<sup>396</sup>
- The Pope's claim of exemption from jurisdiction of the civil authorities is "too insulting, and too foreign to ecclesiastical rule, to be on any account submitted to";<sup>397</sup>
- The Roman Catholic Church had become so morally corrupt through "the trouble of secular affairs" that it was unable to properly administer its own ecclesiastical affairs;<sup>398</sup>
- The Roman Catholic Church had thus become so far removed from the true church order that it could no longer be considered to be a true Church;<sup>399</sup>
- The Bishop of Rome (i.e., the Pope) had become Antichrist (e.g., Calvin writes: "we call the Roman Pontiff Antichrist").<sup>400</sup>

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<sup>391</sup> Ibid, p. 392.

<sup>392</sup> Ibid, p. 396.

<sup>393</sup> Ibid, p. 398.

<sup>394</sup> Ibid, pp. 400-407.

<sup>395</sup> Ibid.

<sup>396</sup> Ibid, p. 404.

<sup>397</sup> Ibid.

<sup>398</sup> Ibid, pp. 404-405.

<sup>399</sup> Ibid, p. 406.

<sup>400</sup> Ibid.

## Appendix 2

### “Calvinism and Other Major Protestant Tenets”

Topic	Calvinism	Lutheranism	Arminianism (Methodist/ Wesleyan Theology)
<b>Human will</b>	<b>Total depravity:</b> <sup>[82]</sup> Humanity possesses "free will", <sup>[83]</sup> but it is in bondage to sin, <sup>[84]</sup> until it is "transformed". <sup>[85]</sup>	<b>Total depravity:</b> <sup>[82]</sup> Humanity possesses free will in regard to "goods and possessions", but is sinful by nature and unable to contribute to its own salvation. <sup>[86][87][88]</sup>	Humanity possesses freedom from necessity, but not "freedom from sin" unless enabled by " <b>prevenient grace</b> ". <sup>[89]</sup>
<b>Election</b>	<b>Unconditional election.</b>	<b>Unconditional election.</b> <sup>[82][90]</sup>	<b>Conditional election</b> in view of foreseen faith or unbelief. <sup>[91]</sup>
<b>Justification and atonement</b>	<b>Justification by faith</b> alone. Various views regarding the extent of the atonement. <sup>[92]</sup>	<b>Justification for all men,</b> <sup>[93]</sup> completed at Christ's death and effective through <b>faith alone.</b> <sup>[94][95][96][97]</sup>	Justification made <b>possible for all</b> through Christ's death, but only completed upon <b>choosing faith</b> in Jesus. <sup>[98]</sup>
<b>Conversion</b>	<b>Monergistic,</b> <sup>[99]</sup> through the means of grace, <b>irresistible.</b>	<b>Monergistic,</b> <sup>[100][101]</sup> through the <b>means of grace, resistible.</b> <sup>[102]</sup>	<b>Synergistic,</b> resistible due to the common grace of free will. <sup>[103]</sup>
<b>Perseverance and apostasy</b>	<b>Perseverance of the saints:</b> the eternally elect in Christ will certainly persevere in faith. <sup>[104]</sup>	Falling away is possible, <sup>[105]</sup> but God gives gospel <b>assurance.</b> <sup>[106][107]</sup>	<b>Preservation is conditional</b> upon continued faith in Christ; with the possibility of a final <b>apostasy.</b> <sup>[108]</sup>



## APPENDIX 3

### “Puritanism and Slavery in Colonial New England, 1640-1700”

#### Part 1

**NOTE:** the following exert was taken Lorenzo J. Greene’s masterpiece, *The Negro in Colonial New England 1620-1776*. This article sheds light on the role of Puritanism and Christianity in setting the parameters of the institution of slavery in the New England colonies. Here we find that the Mosaic legal code (i.e., the Old Testament and ancient Jewish tradition) was the supreme law in colonial New England.

**“CHAPTER VII. THE SLAVE BEFORE THE LAW.** The Negro slaves of New England occupied a dual status: they were considered both as property and as persons before the law. The lines were not rigidly drawn between these two categories, whoever, largely because of the peculiar religio-social philosophy of the Puritans regarding slavery. Migrating to America with the avowed purpose of founding a Bible Commonwealth in the New World, seventeenth century New Englanders modelled many of the institutions on the pattern outlined in the Old Testament. [Footnote: ‘1 A splendid example of this is the code of laws prepared by Nathaniel Ward. Vide Colonial Laws of Massachusetts (Reprinted from Edition of 1672), pp. 14-16; *Conn. Acts and Laws*, pp. 12-13.]. Especially was this true in regard to slavery. In the law legalizing slavery in 1641, the Massachusetts legislature expressly stated that the slave should ‘have all the liberties and Christian usages which the law of God established in Israel doth morally require.’

“The law, in practice, went far toward bettering the legal position of the New England slave. The slavery of the Old Testament was patriarchal, with two recognizable classes of bondmen. One group of slaves, Jews, commonly referred to

a ‘servants,’ were to serve their masters for six years, after which they were to go free, unless they voluntarily chose to remain with their masters. The Jewish slave was in reality ‘a poor brother,’ who had lost his liberty but not his civil rights. In essence the Jewish slave was part of the master’s family. The second class of slaves were non-Jewish—Gentiles or ‘strangers’—who were sold to the Jews. These were ‘bond-servants’ or slaves for life. Although their lot was more difficult, bondservants were protected by the Mosaic Law from extreme mistreatment. Should their yoke become unbearable, they might run away, and later legislation even forbade the return of the fugitive to his master. The bondmen were considered members of the master’s family and were to be ‘brought to God’ by their owners.

“Neither of these forms of bondage was adopted without change by the Puritans. They apparently developed a slave system under which the status of bondman was something between that of the Jewish ‘servant’ and the Gentile ‘slave.’ As such the Negro was considered a part of the Puritan family and, in keeping with the custom of the Hebraic family, was usually referred to as servant, rarely as ‘slave.’ In accordance with the Jewish conception of slavery, especially in the seventeenth century, many slaves were freed after six years of faithful service.”<sup>401</sup>

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<sup>401</sup> Lorenzo J. Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England 1620-1776* (Eastford, CT: Martino Fine Books, 2017), pp. 167-168.

## Part 2

**NOTE: the second exert was also taken Lorenzo J. Greene's masterpiece, *The Negro in Colonial New England 1620-1776*. This piece compares the mild form of New England slavery, which was governed by Puritan laws and interpretations of the Old Testament, to the commercialized slavery that developed in the West Indies and the American South.**

**“CHAPTER IX. MASTER AND SLAVE.** Slavery was considerably milder in New England than elsewhere in colonial America. Negroes were brutally treated in the West Indies and in parts of South America, areas where absentee ownership, industrialized slavery with its emphasis upon profit, the overwhelming proportion of blacks to whites, and the masters' constant fear to Negro uprisings, all made for harsher treatment of the slaves. Notorious for brutality toward their Negroes were the Dutch; rivalling them were the Portuguese and the French. In the plantation colonies of English America slaves were often flogged, mutilated and tortured and the killing of a slave by the master in the colonial South was not a crime punishable at law.”<sup>402</sup>

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<sup>402</sup> Ibid., p. 218.

## APPENDIX 4:

### “Puritanism in Massachusetts: Slavery and the Slave-Trade during the period, 1640-1780”

**NOTE:** the following exert was taken from W.E.B. Du Bois’ doctoral dissertation, *The Suppression of the African Slave Trade to the United States of America, 1638-1870*. This article sheds light on the role which Calvinism played in shaping the morality, attitude, and public policies of Puritan Massachusetts toward African slavery and the slave trade during the seventeen and eighteenth centuries.

#### Part 1

“19. Restrictions in Massachusetts. The early Biblical codes of Massachusetts confined slavery to ‘lawful Captives taken in iust warres, & such strangers as willingly selle themselves or are sold to us.’ The stern Puritanism of early days endeavored to carry this out literally, and consequently when a certain Captain Smith, about 1640, attached an African village and brought some of the unoffending natives home, he was promptly arrested. Eventually, the General Court ordered the Negroes sent home at the colony’s expense, ‘conceiving themselves bound by yc first oportunity to bear witness against yc haynos & crying sinn of manstealing, as also to P’scribe such timely redresse for what is past, & such a law for yc future as may sufficiently deter all oth’s belonging to us to have to do in such vile & most odious courses, iustly abhorred of all good & iust men.’

“The temptation of trade slowly forced the colony from this high moral ground. New England ships were early found in the West Indian slave-trade, and the more the carrying trade developed, the more did the profits of this branch of it attract Puritan captains. By the beginning of the eighteenth century the slave-trade was openly recognized as legitimate commerce; cargoes came regularly to Boston, and ‘The merchants of Boston quoted negroes, like any other merchandise demanded by their correspondents.’ At the same time, the Puritan conscience began to rebel against the growth of actual slavery on New England soil. It was a much less violent wrenching of moral ideas of right and wrong to allow

Massachusetts men to carry slaves to South Carolina than to allow cargoes to come into Boston, and become slaves in Massachusetts. Early in the eighteenth century, therefore, opposition arose to the further importation of Negroes, and in 1705 an act 'for the Better Preventing of a Spurious and Mixt Issue,' laid a restrictive duty of 4 [pounds] on all slaves imported. One provision of this act plainly illustrates the attitude of Massachusetts: like the acts of many of the New England colonies, it allowed a rebate of the whole duty on the re-exportation. The harbors of New England were thus offered as a free exchange-mart for slavers. All the duty acts of the Southern and Middle colonies allowed a rebate of one-half or three-fourths of the duty on the re-exportation of the slave, thus laying a small tax on even temporary importation.

"The Act of 1705 was evaded, but it was not amended until 1728, when the penalty for evasion was raised to 100 [pounds]. The act remained in force, except possibly for one period of four years, until 1749. Meantime the movement against importation grew. A bill 'for preventing the Importation of Slaves into this Province' was introduced in the Legislature in 1767, but after strong opposition and disagreement between House and Council it was dropped. In 1771 the struggle was renewed. A similar bill passed, but was vetoed by Governor Hutchinson. The imminent war and the discussions incident to it had repeated attempts to gain executive consent to a prohibitory law. In 1774 such a bill was twice passed, but never received assent.

"The new Revolutionary government first met the subject in the case of two Negroes captured on the high seas, who were advertised for sale at Salem. A resolution was introduced into the Legislature, directing the release of the Negroes, and declaring 'That the selling and enslaving the human species is a direct violation of the natural rights alike vested in all men by their Creator, and utterly inconsistent with the avowed principles on which this, and the other United States, have carried their struggle for liberty even to the last appeal.' To this the Council would not consent; and the resolution, as finally passed, merely forbade the sale or ill-treatment of the Negroes. Committees on the slavery question were appointed in 1776 and 1777, and although a letter to Congress on the matter, and a bill for the abolition of slavery were reported, no decisive action was taken.

“All such efforts were finally discontinued, as the system was already practically extinct in Massachusetts and the custom of importation had nearly ceased. Slavery was eventually declared by judicial decision to have been abolished. The first step toward stopping the participation of Massachusetts citizens in the slave-trade outside the State was taken in 1785, when a committee of inquiry was appointed by the Legislature. No act was, however, passed until 1788, when participation in the trade was prohibited, on pain of 50 [pounds] forfeit for every slave and 200 [pounds] for every ship engaged.”<sup>403</sup>

**NOTE: the following excerpt was taken from W.E.B. Du Bois’ doctoral dissertation, *The Suppression of the African Slave Trade to the United States of America, 1638-1870*. This article sheds light on the role which Calvinism played in shaping the morality, attitude, and public policies of Puritan Massachusetts toward African slavery and the slave trade during the seventeen and eighteenth centuries.**

## **Part 2**

### **General Differences in the Character of Slavery—North and South:**

“In colonies like those in the West Indies and in South Carolina and Georgia, the rapid importation into America of a multitude of savages gave rise to a system of slavery far different from that which the last Civil War abolished. The strikingly harsh and even inhuman slave codes in these colonies show this. Crucifixion, burning, and starvation were legal modes of punishment. The rough and brutal character of the time and place was partly responsible for this, but a more decisive reason lay in the fierce and turbulent character of the imported Negroes. The docility to which long years of bondage and strict discipline gave rise was absent, and insurrections and acts of violence were of frequent occurrence. Again and again the danger of planters being ‘cut off by their own negroes’ is mentioned, both in the islands and on the continent. This condition of vague dread and unrest not only increased the severity of laws and strengthened the police system, but was

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<sup>403</sup> W.E.B. Du Bois, *Writings* (New York, N.Y.: The Library of America, 1986), pp. 37-39.



the prime motive back of all the earlier efforts to check the further importation of slaves.

“On the other hand, in New England and New York the Negroes were merely house servants or farm hands, and were treated neither better nor worse than servants in general in those days. Between these two extremes, the system of slavery varied from a mild serfdom in Pennsylvania and New Jersey to an aristocratic caste system in Maryland and Virginia.”<sup>404</sup>

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<sup>404</sup> Ibid, pp. 13-14.

## Appendix 5

### **“African Americans and the Reformed Tradition”**

*“Calvin history professor Eric Washington has made a specialty of studying African Americans thought within the Reformed tradition of Christianity, specifically Calvinism. His interest in the topic dates back to 1998 when he embraced Reformed theology after reading Martin Luther's On the Bondage of the Will and R.C. Sproul's book Chosen by God: "It answered the tough questions I had regarding how a person comes to faith. Being African American and Baptist, I knew of no one in my circles who was Calvinist. This sparked my interest in searching for African American Calvinists." Washington, a native of New Orleans, La., did his undergraduate work at Loyola University before going on to earn a master's from Miami University in African history and a Ph.D. from Michigan State University in African American history. ?*

**“How did your interest in African American participation in the Reformed and Calvinistic tradition begin?**

“When I began to study and immerse myself in Reformed theology, I realized that what I believed had historical relevance and that there is a connection between me and the "church universal." That naturally led me to think about and to begin investigating where people of African descent fall within Reformed Christianity. It wasn't until I got my hands on Anthony Carter's book, *On Being Black and Reformed*, that I really had a handy reference.

**“What happened as you began to move from your Baptist roots to a more Reformed approach to your faith? ?**

“I told my pastor that I was now a Calvinist, and I think it went over his head. But I served as an associate minister at the church where I was, and when I began teaching and preaching within the framework of Reformed theology, eventually I

was asked to refrain from doing so. And that ended a long tenure at that church, which was tough, but I was at that point committed to the Reformed, Calvinist faith.

**“Why does it seem like we know so little about this topic?”**

“First, churches that call themselves "Reformed" are relatively few when compared to other churches here in the U.S. and even North America. Within those numbers, African Americans are very, very few. Even when we consider the numbers of African Americans within Presbyterian bodies, we aren't talking about millions of people. When we think of African American Christians, we think of Baptists, Methodists and now Pentecostals and Charismatics. I also believe it takes someone within the Reformed tradition to see Reformational tenets in the writings of otherwise well-known historical figures like H. H. Garnet. Scholars tend to bypass that the man was a Presbyterian and that Reformed theology had to affect his speeches and writings.

**“Who was H.H. Garnet?”**

“Henry Highland Garnet was a Presbyterian pastor and social activist during the 1840s and beyond. He was born into slavery in Maryland in 1815, but he and his whole immediate family escaped slavery in 1824 and settled in New York City. Eventually, Garnet received a very good education, including a seminary education at a Presbyterian school in New York state. He began pastoring in 1843, but he's best known for his "Address to Slaves" in 1843, which he gave in Buffalo, N.Y., at a conference. In the speech he advocated for slaves to lift off their shackles through outward rebellion. I'm doing the speech no justice; it needs to be read carefully because the reasons he gives for slaves to revolt are quite biblical and Reformed even.

**“How intertwined are African Americans, Calvinism and slavery? ?”**

“African American contact with Calvinism came within the context of slavery. Slaves in New England and in New Amsterdam were part of households that for

the most part catechized them. Obviously, the Puritans were Calvinists and the Dutch were Reformed. This was back in the 17th century. When Baptists came to America during the 17th century, there were a few slaves who became part of Baptist churches. There is evidence of slaves in the membership of Baptist churches in Rhode Island during this period, and these Baptists were Calvinists. Then, when the first independent African-American Baptist churches appeared during the 1770s, these were Calvinistic Baptist churches.

“One famous African-American Calvinist, Lemuel Haynes, offers a great example of how some African Americans applied Calvinism to their contexts. Haynes was a Congregationalist pastor who spent 30 years (1788-1818) of his life pastoring a white congregation in Vermont. He applied Calvinism to speak out against both the Atlantic Slave Trade and slavery itself, and according to his Calvinism he believed that Federalist Party was the most proper party to lead the young American Republic.

**“What gets you excited about the topic of African Americans and the Reformed tradition?”**

“The thing that gets me excited is I believe that Reformed theology answers those historic questions that African Americans have contended with since 1619 (when the first group of African servants arrived in Colonial America). Because Reformed theology begins with the sovereignty of God and his all-encompassing Providence, there is an anchor for African Americans as we seek to understand our historic plight on these shores. I admit that the "secret things belong to God," but I'm impressed how African American Protestants (not just Reformed folk) during the 19th century asserted that God's plan included their enslavement, but also their acceptance of the gospel, their freedom from slavery, and their sending forth missionaries back to Africa to help "redeem" it. I have problems with their notions of what entailed redemption because they held that bringing Western civilization was part and parcel with redemption. Anyway, that impresses me. More so than that, what excites me about this topic is that I believe Reformed theology is an accurate expression of Holy Scripture. When the gospel is preached and taught from a confessional Reformed perspective there is Jesus Christ as he has revealed

himself on the pages of his Word. I do believe that Reformation is sorely needed in African American churches. ?

**“What is next for you in terms of your work in this area?”**

“Right now, I'm expanding my research on the topic of Ethiopianism, which was an African American version of the Providential Design theory regarding African enslavement and their Christianization here in the U.S. To be brief, some European-American Christians (Protestants) believed that God intended the enslavement of Africans so that they could [be] brought under the gospel and receive salvation. Some European-Americans believed some Christian slaves should be emancipated in order to return to Africa and preach the gospel ... My research is on Lewis G. Jordan, who served as corresponding secretary of the Foreign Mission Board of the National Baptist Convention, USA, and how he articulated Ethiopianism to motivate National Baptists to support African missions.”